THE DEVIL

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MAURICE GARÇON & JEAN VINCHON

TRANSLATED BY STEPHEN HADEN GUEST
FROM THE SIXTH FRENCH EDITION

THE DEVIL

An Historical Critical and Medical Study

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PART I

CHAPTER I

THE DEVIL AND HIS RELATION TO THE OTHER MALEFICENT DIVINITIES

Often, when the origin of the Christian Devil is sought, an attempt is made to relate him to ancient beliefs, anterior to the Christian religion. Because of certain resemblances, distant or close, confusion has sometimes arisen which has led to serious error, and it does not seem idle, at the beginning of a critical study of the Demon as he is met with in the teachings of the Church for ten centuries past, first to establish clearly what his origins were, and to take special pains to separate his very specific personality from others, appearing to resemble him, which belong to earlier or contemporary or neighbouring religions.

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this book pp 15

The Christian Devil, if we consider him in the classic form which he assumed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, is, we shall see, an infinitely complex personage, of relatively recent formation. His form, his face, his appearance, his character, which were established precisely and studied meticulously by the theologians and physicians and jurists, are very definitely distinguishable from the infernal or maleficent divinities of the different mythologies which preceded him. What has made it possible for the confusion to arise, and for the diverse creations of different geniuses to be wrongly confounded, is that all beliefs seem to share certain fairly simple fundamental metaphysical ideas which are almost instinctive, and by whose aid, from the very dawn of humanity, certain problems of elementary morality have been dealt with in convenient fashion.

Mankind carries with it a tremendous inheritance of terror. Before being a religious animal, man was a fearful animal. For thousands of years, knowing nothing of the phenomena of nature, impotent to protect himself against storms and catastrophes of every kind, or even against the beasts, incapable of perceiving the reasons and the causes of those wondrous happenings which could not fail to sow terror, he was unable to discover whether or not the volitional element existed in external objects. Therefore, projecting outside himself wills which he believed were being exercised upon him, he peopled the world about him, in his first imaginative effort, with lives, opinions, and passions like his own.

Among the terrors inflicted upon man by his ignorance, the fear of death must be accounted as one of the strongest and deepest. Every undeveloped individual preserves within himself an instinctive egoism which makes him forget his final doom. This doom appears to him, indeed, against nature, if not impossible. Its coming terrifies him. The death of his neighbour recalls it to his mind ; he is frightened, and he perceives obscurely that the dead man still lives in the memory of the living, and is perpetuated in their thoughts. From that moment he comes forth from the void and takes up a new life, a purely spiritual one now, more or less completely free from terrestrial occupations according to the degree of imagination of him who creates it. Ancestors and friends stay in the memory, and, more or less disinterestedly, prowl about those who remain alive. Their disinterestedness, their interest, or their hostility, make them either protectors or enemies. Ancestor-worship appears, comforting the living, who from now on are assured that they will not disappear entirely.

Death participates in the universal animism, and, because those things henceforth endowed with a spiritual life remain unchanged, and seem to partake of eternity, man himself rises to the height of the gods by accepting death as a passage from the material world to the world beyond.

The unknown beings who have been diversely humanised are sometimes in agreement with one another and sometimes in conflict. Above human quarrels and human interests there are played out, in a superior, invisible, and inaccessible domain, the quarrels of the spirits. Their appetites and interests are similar to those of men, but formidable and terrible in their terrestrial consequences.

His conviction that he had understood the world enslaved man yet more deeply. He no longer seeks to penetrate the mysteries which, in their essence superior and divine, must escape his understanding until the distant day when, freed from his first terrors, he shall with a mad hope seek by another way, by science, new disillusion.

Primitive man simplified the world by animating it, every terrifying thing thereby explaining itself, and unknown causes seeming to become clear. Surrounded by forces which had been, for the most part, anthropomorphised, the individual felt less isolated; it remained to entreat, to pray, to gain the good graces of the strange powers whose often tangible manifestations filled him with reverent awe.

Thus, as M. Salomon Reinach has pointed out, the word " religion " implies, without any material constraint, a limitation of the individual will, or, rather, of human activity in so far as it depends upon the will.

Little by little there grows up the notion of things which are permitted and of things which are forbidden—sometimes for utilitarian reasons, sometimes without apparent reason—and then we get *taboos*. The soul of things, the spiritual life of objects, the spirit of the dead, the spirit of spirits which is God, the sole or multiple creator—all these produce a continual variety of effects, among which men sometimes perceive, or think they perceive, certain vague relationships. They divine favourable and unfavourable deities. The notion of good and evil, the elementary principle in social relations, is extended into the domain of the gods. Some are beneficent, others maleficent. To the former are given prayer and supplication, and alliance is made with them to secure protection against the latter.

Empirical observations lead to the belief that certain signs, certain words, have power to appease some and to excite others. Certain plants and perfumes seem to enjoy a particular virtue. The discovery of certain sympathies, certain experimental motions, and a systematisation of them, seem to produce desirable effects. Religion takes on form ; a ritual is established ; confidence is born.

But man accepts with an ill grace a passive and impotent rôle. Very soon he desires to escape from a slavery which weighs upon him. Wearied with obedience, he seeks to command. He seeks out the weakness by which he may seize hold upon divinity and subject it to himself. Prayer becomes command ; magic appears.

Voltaire has said of magic that it is the secret of doing what nature cannot do. This definition is arguable. Primitive man cannot conceive what is or is not possible to nature. We must rather suppose that magic has no other design than to constrain nature to do at a particular moment what it is supposed it could do freely, but would not necessarily.

Thus magic in its origin is not separated from religion : it is one of the forms of the rite, and can be either imperative or suppliant : it is by these qualities of necessity and force that we can recognise it. Religion, moreover, never completely separates itself from it. In his relations with the divinity the religious man always practises a certain amount of magic, in the degree in which a certain act or a certain ritual word constitutes an understanding with the superior force, to obtain from it, and with its agreement, a certain definite effect.

However, it is natural that while a simple invocation or prayer is generally respectful, and often timid, the more audacious magic command, whereby a man gives his orders to God, should be less embarrassed by scruples. Humanity has raised itself so high that it believes it has power to dominate, at its own whim and at its own time, He or Those Whom, until then, it had only entreated. Man, who has become the master, gives his instincts free rein ; usually he solicits the help of the superior force, which can no longer resist him, for material and utilitarian ends, without concerning himself about moral values. He seeks the satisfaction of his passions.

By this process, magic, which at first was a simple manifestation of a permitted faith, becomes synonymous with a dangerous and reprobate science. Little by little the use of the magic power tended more and more frequently to the illicit and the forbidden, in the sense that it sought only to satisfy material desires and needs of every kind, from concupiscence to vengeance and crime.

Thus, while there had been established the great dualism of good and evil of which men were the witnesses and the playthings, pure religion separated itself little by little, as far as appearances went, from magic, because of the opposite aims of those who practised the latter. Doubtless, as we have said, religion preserves a magic part, but, in the evolution of common speech, magic and evil ended by becoming confounded. Whether we take the combat between Indra, the god of the sky, and Vrita, the demon of the night, which forms the constant theme of the hymns of the

Rig-Veda, or the battles of Ormuz and Ahriman, the principle of light and the principle of darkness, or the opposition in Egyptian mythology of Ra and Set, or the rivalry of Jehovah and the Demon in the Old Testament—nearly always magic is found more particularly on the maleficent side, and Deuteronomy pronounces exemplary penalties against magicians.

For magic is often confounded, in more evolved religions, with a whole series of sciences which procure, to those who practise them, supernatural power : medicine, astrology, enchantment.

The magician has passed insensibly from good to evil under the pressure of his desire to obtain what he wishes. Now master in his turn, he ceases to address the beneficent deity, but only appeals to the evil force which is subjected to his evil instincts. Under a veil of dissimulation he transmits recipes full of danger ; hidden, he participates in the most terrible mysteries. He is feared. The pious keep away from him ; the evil have recourse to him.

It is to this extent only that the Christian Devil is related either to more ancient or to contemporaneous traditions. If we consider the Devil as the spirit of evil, the adversary of God, who is the spirit of good, it is incontestable that he belongs to a tradition as old as men themselves and their first beliefs. But each religion has differed profoundly, not only in the representation, but still more in the form of the manifestations which it has attributed to its deities. The power of each of them, his particular characteristics, his appearance, even the cult which is given to him, vary from one belief to another, according to the ethnological bias of his creators.

Doubtless a subtle mind can achieve a certain *rapprochement*, but its subtilty often seems overgreat and to be seeking out impossible correspondences between traditions which have no relation.

If we consider Christian demonolatry impartially, and without preconceived ideas, taking it as it is in the descriptions of the men of the Renaissance, we must admit that we cannot really relate it to anything identical elsewhere. We must certainly not exaggerate this assertion too categorically. It may not be impossible to find, here and there, certain trailing branches of vague pagan superstition, but what can be asserted is, that these are without any great importance.

The resemblances which have seemed the most precise require some illumination.

A very general observation is that we can scarcely imagine a belief without ritual ceremony, an exterior manifestation, by invocation, supplication, or command, to the obscure power. The relation of man to his gods is very rarely to be reduced to simple contemplation or pure inner meditation. Generally, manifestations of faith translate themselves into loud words, gestures, and sometimes threats. But to try to find, between all these expressions of feeling, a single link, without any breach of continuity, seems, although the attempt has sometimes been made, an impossible endeavour. Although it is true that religions sometimes borrow from one another bits of legend, to assert identification would be unreasonable.

The apparent *rapprochement* which it seems possible to achieve is due to the fact that men have few means of externalising their feelings. There is, let it be repeated, scarcely any external manifestation of a cult without the celebration of a real or symbolic sacrifice, without the celebration of ceremonies, whether they be silent and contemplative or loud and frenzied. But just as dreams, which transform but do not create, are always the new perception of a lessened or augmented image, in the same way the order and quality of the external signs which are at man's disposition for the expression of his feelings are limited to a small number of sensorial representations.

It is thus, for example, that the classic Sabbath, the diabolic and orgiastic fête, will comprise everything which it is customary to find in a fête—that is to say, a feast, music, dances, and lewdness.

Must we then relate to the demoniac Sabbath every fête in honour of a god wherein these characteristics are to be found? Are we to discover in the orgiastic fêtes of pagan antiquity close ties with the sacrilegious ceremony celebrated in honour of the Devil? Ought we, because in the Dionysian ceremonies the celebrants became excited and drank and sang, to relate the exploits of the witches of the sixteenth century to their frenzies? It appears to us that this would be a grave error. Michelet expressed it clearly when he wrote: "*We must say of the Sabbaths: this word has designated very different things at different periods.*"

Thus, if we take the Sabbath in the large sense of a ritual fête, pagan or demoniac, it becomes every ritual ceremony intended to celebrate the joy of living the life of the flesh; but if, on the contrary, we give this word its true sense, as it has been transmitted to us by the Church, it means solely the diabolic and impious ceremony of Christian times, celebrated to render sacrilegious homage to the fallen angel, the symbol of evil and of perversity.

Thus the Christian Devil has a personality of his own, independent of those of the other more or less evil divinities which can be met with in neighbouring mythologies.

He only participates in his essence in a general idea which dominates nearly all religions. He is the representation of one of the elements in the contrast between good and evil ; he fulfils for humanity a need of moral equilibrium. But he departs farther and farther from the other representations of the same mythical symbol, just as the religions, which nearly all started from animism, have followed different careers according to the characteristics or the race of the men who made them.

CHAPTER II

THE ORIGINS OF THE CHRISTIAN DEVIL

The Old Testament begins, one might almost say, with an exploit of the Demon. The Serpent appears at the very beginning of Genesis. Because of this intervention, which dominates mankind, the whole biblical tradition is impregnated with his presence. However, it must be admitted that the spirit of evil is seldom directly named.

Doubtless he prowls on every page, accompanying and protecting the race of Cain, compelling the Eternal—to such an extent does he corrupt mankind—to exterminate the human race by a universal deluge. Ham, the son of Noah, relapsed beneath the empire of the Demon, and the eternal struggle began anew.

It would be superfluous to seek out, throughout all the texts of Scripture, all the interventions of the spirit of evil, such as they have been discovered by the innumerable theologians who have given themselves to the problem. What is more important is, as we have indicated in the preceding chapter, to find magic very early assimilated to maleficent manifestations.

When Moses and Aaron sought to persuade Pharaoh that he must let the people of Israel go, and when they showed him by miracles the will of God, the Demon, to prevent these things from happening, came to the rescue: "Then Pharaoh also called for the wise men and the sorcerers: and they also, the magicians of Egypt, did in like manner with their enchantments."[1]

Jehovah commands in his laws: "Thou shalt not suffer a sorceress to live."[2] In Leviticus the condemnation of magic is repeated: "Turn ye not unto them that have familiar spirits, nor unto the wizards; seek not them out, to be defiled by them,"[3] and: "And the soul that turneth unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto the wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set My face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people."[4]

Deuteronomy contains almost a whole chapter against divination and magic[5] and Saul chased the magicians and diviners from his territories,[6] but in an erring moment he consulted the Witch of Endor.[7]

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[1] Exod. vii. 11.

[2] Exod. xxii. 18.

[3] Levi. xix. 31.

[4] Lev. xx. 6.

[5] Deut., xviii. 9 to 22.

[6] 1 Sam. xxviii. 3.

[7] 1 Sam. xxviii. 7.

When an example is given of the wickedness of Manasseh, King of Jerusalem, it is written: " . . . he practised augury, and used enchantments, and practised sorcery, and dealt with them that had familiar spirits, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger."[1] On the other hand, when Jeremiah counsels submission to the King of Babylon, he cries, fearing the intervention of evil spirits: " But as for you, hearken ye not to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your dreams, nor to your soothsayers, nor to your sorcerers . . . for they prophesy a lie unto you."[2]

Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, inspired by God, showed themselves before Nebuchadnezzar: " He found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters that were in all his realm."[3] Yet the king was surrounded with magicians, astrologers, and enchanters, who explained his dreams to him,[4] and all admitted themselves vanquished by the superior power of the true prophet in whom was the divine spirit.[5] And finally Malachi, the voice of the Lord, cried: " And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers."[6]

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[1] 2 Chron. xxxiii. 6.
[2] Jer. xxvii. 9–10.
[3] Dan. i. 20.
[4] Dan. ii. 2, 10, 17; iv. 7; v. 7.
[5] Dan. v. 11 and following.
[6] Mal. iii. 5.

Hatred of sorcerers remained intense in the New Testament. Simon the Magician is denounced in the Acts of the Apostles,[1] and the false prophet Bar-Jesus, stricken with blindness by a miracle, is a magician whom Paul called son of the Devil.[2]

If the Demon is seldom mentioned in the Old Testament, and if his intervention by means of magic is spoken of only implicitly, he is, on the contrary, explicitly designated in the Gospels and the works whose totality comprises the New Testament. The Devil appears personally ; he is revealed in other fashion than by the wonders with which he favours his disciples ; it is he himself who tempts Jesus in the wilderness and carries Him to the pinnacle of the Temple.[3]

In order that our exposition shall be developed clearly, it is desirable to point out those passages wherein the diabolic manifestations take a peculiarly characteristic form—passages which we shall examine later. The Synoptic Gospels give us, in fact, certain very precise descriptions, whose basis and explanation we shall seek in the second part of this work.

During his journey in Galilee there were brought to Jesus those who were the victims of divers sicknesses and of tormenting pains, the possessed and the demented, and He cured them.[1] His healings of the possessed were frequent. At Capernaum and in the places round about He also made the Demons come forth from the bodies of the demoniacs[2]; in the country of the Gadarenes He forced the Devil to come out of the bodies of men to pass into the bodies of swine.[3] And, again, through Jesus, the dumb man recovered his speech when Satan had vanished[4]: and Christ gave to His disciples the power necessary to cast out wicked spirits.[5]

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[1] Acts viii. 9.

[2] Acts xiii. 6 and following.

[3] Matt. iv. 1–10 ; Mark i. 12–13 ; Luke iv. 1–13.

The mere approach of the Saviour filled the Demons with terror; they prostrated themselves before Him.[6] and, when the Scribes wished to discredit Him, they accused Him only of being the Prince of the Demons.[7] The Demons themselves, through the mouths of the possessed, said that they were legion.[8] Mary Magdalene was possessed by seven of them.[9]

When Jesus wanted to give proof of His power to Herod, He said to His followers: " Go and say to that fox, behold, I cast out devils."[10] Finally,

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[1] Matt. iv. 24; Mark i. 35–9.

[2] Mark i. 23–8; Luke iv. 31–7; Matt. viii. 16.

[3] Matt. viii. 28–34; Mark v. 1–20; Luke viii. 26–39.

[4] Matt. ix. 32–4; Luke xi. 14; Mark ix. 17.

[5] Matt. x. 1 and 8; Mark iii. 15, vi. 7; Luke x. 17–21.

[6] Mark iii. 11.

[7] Mark iii. 22; Matt. xii. 22–50; Luke xi. 14–32.

[8] Mark v. 8, 9; Luke viii. 27.

[9] Mark xvi. 9–10; Luke ix. 2.

[10] Luke xiii. 32.

Judas Iscariot's betrayal is explained, for Luke, by the fact that the Demon had entered into him.[1]

The tradition preserved in the Fourth Gospel almost entirely neglects questions concerning Demons. While the Synoptic Gospels were eager to relate every miraculous healing, John has very little interest in them, and the relations of Jesus and the Demon are practically passed over in silence. The Johannine Christ does not cast out Lucifer.

The truth is that the Devil and his reign have, in this work, passed into a domain which is mainly of a moral order. It seems that the possessed are the unbelievers and the sinners. Speaking to the Jews, Christ said to them: "Ye are of your father the Devil, and the lusts of your father it is your will to do."[2] Satan appears as the symbol of living falsehood, as Christ is the living truth. The old duality has a positive character; its influence, although it is less material and perhaps less gross, does not seem less continual. When the Jews say to Christ: "Thou hast a Devil," He answers: "I have not a Devil; but I honour My Father, and ye dishonour Me." But when Jesus adds: "If a man keep My word, he shall never see death," the Jews answered: "Now we know that Thou hast a Devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets;

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[1] Luke xxii. 3.

[2] John viii. 44.

and Thou sayest . . . art Thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead ? "[1]

For St. John, to have a Demon within one is less to be materially possessed than, rather, to be inspired by the spirit of evil. The accusation is repeated several times. After hearing the Parable of the Good Shepherd, the Jews still say : " He hath a Devil, and is mad."[2]

The Evangelist has eliminated the cases of possession, the Devil has become more spiritual, and it is into Judas's heart that he enters to cause his treachery.[3]

The Acts of the Apostles are filled with more precise details of diabolic happenings, which recall those of Mark, Luke, and Matthew.

The towns near Jerusalem are full of the possessed,[4] and the Demons utter loud cries through their mouths.[5] A girl inspired by the spirit of divination predicts the future,[6] Paul exorcises the Demons, and certain Jews having sought to imitate him, the Devils make " the man in whom the evil spirit was, leap on them."[7]

It has seemed necessary to recall the principal passages of Scripture where Satan and magic are spoken of because we shall see that, truly, the whole demonological doctrine of the Church rests

[1] John viii. 48.
[2] John x. 20.
[3] John xiii. 27.
[4] Acts v. 16.
[5] Acts viii. 7.
[6] Acts xvi. 16–18.
[7] Acts xix. 11–16.

on these texts. They are the basis of all the works of all the authors upon this problem. Doubtless we shall find that reasoning, logical in form, led the theologians to create around these texts doctrines which were often complicated ; it is none the less true that it is these texts, and these only, upon which they based themselves, and it is to them that we must always return ; they are the foundation of dogma.

As we see, the diabolic tradition was firmly established from the very beginning of Christianity. It never disappeared, but in the course of time it took on a varying importance.

The Demon, truly, always remained the symbol of the spirit which tempts mankind, and the Fathers of the Church gave much thought to him ; but they studied his character above all, if one may say so, from the point of view of moral problems. His actual presence on earth was very little manifested ; his powers were traced by means of ancient works. It is an observation of general application that a new religion never actually rejects the gods of the preceding religion, which it has supplanted and which it combats. It adopts them, but never fails to give them a maleficent rôle ; the first centuries of Christianity, which confounded all the mythologies without absolutely denying the reality of any of them, accepted the gods of paganism but decreed that the inhabitants of Olympus were only Demons, and that the ancient idols were the divinities of hell. Actually the Devil tempted men very little. His direct interventions on earth were rare. The Church, occupied with its struggle against alien religions and against schisms and heresies, had not the leisure to consecrate itself to a search for a present Devil. The latter, being neglected, did not show himself; and if the established dogma taught his existence, one may nevertheless say that he did not seem to constitute a real or immediate danger.

When we come to study the pursuit and punishment of sorcerers and magicians we shall see the different texts of which use was made. Their severity was not great.

It was forbidden to practise magic, but above all, it seems, in order to defend the magicians against the danger which their souls might incur. The Devil was known, and his power was not exaggerated. The fear he inspired was not excessive. If the Church took care to put its faithful on guard, it was above all in order to warn them, so that they should not fall into superstitions that had incontestably issued from paganism and which might estrange them from the true Christian faith.

A particularly important document for this subject is the *Canon Episcopi*. The age of this text is uncertain. Del Rio[1] and Boguet[2] wrongly refer to the Council of Aquileia, Lancre,[3] to the Council of Ancyra. It is reproduced in part in the capitularies of Charles the Bald in 872, whence it is concluded that in the ninth century a large number of things, which later were declared to be certain, were still treated as purely fantastic. This Canon, which relates to sorcery and magic, recalls that certain wretched women, converted to Satan, and made subject by the illusions and phantasms of the Demon, believe and profess that during the hours of night they traverse, in nocturnal silence, vast spaces of the earth, accompanied by Diana, the pagan goddess, or Herodias, and an innumerable crowd of women riding upon certain beasts, obeying the orders of the Devil. The text observes that the great multitude who believe this are grossly deceived, for, believing it, they leave the true faith and fall into pagan error, for no divine power or will can exist outside that of God alone.

The Canon, cautiously, shows further that men are deceived in their dreams, and that one must be mad to believe that the body can undergo the effect of what takes place in the mind only. It is said, further, that he who believes these things belongs to God no longer, but to the Devil (*infidelis est et Pagano deterior*).

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[1] *Les controverses et recherches magiques* (Paris, 1611), II. quest. 6. Cf. Bodin, *De la demonomanie des Sorciers* (Lyon, 1587), II. 4.

[2] *Discours des Sorciers* (Lyon, 1610), chap. xix.

[3] *Tableau de l'inconstance des mauvais anges et démons* (Paris, 1613), II. disc. 1.

This document is of capital importance, for it gives us evidence that the Church at that time attached no importance to the Sabbath and the diabolic manifestations which were going to be the grand preoccupations of the succeeding centuries.

In the same way, the reality of the effects of magic, which was first to become a dogma and then, later on, a matter whose practice was to become a heresy, was long denied by the theologians. The Council of Braza in 563 said : " If anyone alleges, with Priscillian, that the Devil has made certain wicked creations, and that by his own virtue he creates thunder and lightning, and tempests and droughts, let him be anathema : if anyone believes with the pagans and Priscillian that the soul and the body of man are fatally subjected to the course of the stars, let him be anathema."[1]

The Council of Ancyra in 314 had punished the magicians lightly enough : " Those who follow the superstitions of the pagans and consult diviners, or bring these kinds of people into their houses for discovery, or to do malefices, shall undergo five years' penance, that is to say, three years prostrate and two years without offering."[1]

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[1] Can. 8–9.

The Council of Ireland in 466 anathematised a Christian who believed that he was a sorcerer or who pretended to be one, and forbade him to be received in Church until he had done penance.[2]

The Church strove to prevent superstition from gaining over the multitude. Its confused legislation had for its object, above all, the destruction of all the kinds of divination and magic, whether Roman or Teutonic, whose practice had persisted among the people.

In the twelfth century, John of Salisbury, Bishop of Chartres, wrote: "The Evil Spirit, with the permission of God, so far extended its malice that some falsely believed that what they suffered in imagination, and because of their own fault, was real and external. . . . Who can be blind enough not to see in that a pure delusion of the Demons? We must not forget that those to whom this happens are poor women or simple and credulous people."[3]

In 1310 the Synod of Treves marks one of the last stages of the attitude of incredulity. Held under the direction of Archbishop Baudoin, Count of Luxemburg, it enumerated with great care those acts which were reproved, and it ordered the priests to prohibit them, but the only sanction was a withdrawal of the sacraments, followed, in the case of hardened criminals, by excommunication. Finally, it was said : " Let no woman allege that she rides during the night with Diana or Herodias, for it is an illusion of the Demon." Such an assertion was a striking denial of the Sabbath, which popular belief was beginning to create.

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[1] Can. 24.

[2] Can. 16.

[3] Joh. Saresberiens, *Polycratic*, II. 17.

But the Holy Office, whose power had become assured, had for long been ambitious to extend its activities to matters of witchcraft.

In 1257 it had solicited from Alexander IV the right to occupy itself with divination and magic. The Pope enjoined upon the inquisitors, by the Bull *quod super nonnulis*, that they should not let themselves be distracted by problems alien to their functions. He reminded them that, since these functions were limited to seeking out heretics, magic could not, as such, come within their competence except on condition that it was connected with a question of heresy.

The Inquisition did not forget its project. Thenceforward it sought, in the solution of difficult cases, for matters of magic which, being clothed in some heretical garb, would permit it to extend to them its sphere of competence. The door was open for a series of practical questions concerning the degree of heresy of the Satanic manifestations. The idea was gradually formed that invocation of the Devil and the pact that was signed with him were heretical, and an ingenious dilemma was posed: the man who invokes a Demon, believing he is not committing a sin, is an avowed heretic; if he knows that he is committing a sin, he is not a heretic, but deserves to be classed among the heretics, because to hope that a Demon can tell the truth is the act of a heretic.

This idea rapidly triumphed. The permission to repress necessitated a closer study of the Demon's manifestations. On every side the demonologists set to work. Pope John XXII, who was afflicted with persecution mania, published the Bull *super illius specula*, and sank into the most astounding credulity:

> There are people who, being Christians in name only, have abandoned the first light of truth to ally themselves with Death and make compact with hell. They sacrifice to Demons and adore them, they make or procure for themselves images, rings, phials, mirrors, and other things again to which they attach the Demons by their magic art, drawing answers from them, asking of them help to carry out their evil designs, engaging themselves in the most shameful servitude for the most shameful of things.

Finally, Gregory XI in 1374 encouraged the Inquisitor of Paris to pursue the sorcerers.

The Bull *summis desiderantes* of Innocent VIII, 5th December, 1484, is the capital work in which there is to be found, in the germ, the whole theological theory of magic and demonology. The Pope observes that the world is filled with sorcerers, and, terrified by their growing audacity, he gathers together every scrap of belief, superstition, and folk-lore ; he establishes the powers of the inquisitors and exacerbates the zeal of the judges.

The tales of the populace had now taken on the form of dogma, but it remained to classify them, and to elaborate doctrine.

The theologians were not slow to give themselves to the work.

CHAPTER III

THE FORMATION OF THE CHRISTIAN DEVIL

We have shown how the belief in the Spirit of Evil, which is general in all theogonies, was constituted and established in the Christian doctrine. The ancient and universal superstition reappeared within a particular frame, and the belief in the Devil became a dogma of the Catholic religion. Popular tales which were widely spread and amplified, legends scattered abroad and then gathered together—these for a long time formed the naïf basis of a conviction that was strong, but without great cohesion. For long men contented themselves with more or less fantastic and fanciful tales gathered and repeated haphazard. The Canons of the Councils give scarcely any definitions or descriptions of diabolic matters ; it seems that for a long time the Church treated the Devil rather as a symbol than as a tangible and present reality.

However, when one studies the works on witchcraft of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, one cannot fail to be struck by the certitude of the doctrines which are taught, and the precision of the descriptions. It seems, indeed, that suddenly, about the fourteenth century, the Devil must have manifested himself personally in an imperious desire to make himself well known, for it to have become possible to expound so clearly, and to discuss with so much certitude, his powers, his manifestations, and even his corporeal shape : until then he had been so little known that there had been no attempt, even, to describe him.

Whilst before the fourteenth century Lucifer had been treated as an enemy of the human race, but had been regarded rather as a pure spirit, dangerous and tempting, but manifested to men only by the teaching of the catechism and by a few mysterious magic recipes, suddenly the Devil appeared at every cross-road, and the theologians discovered and revealed his smallest secrets. The judges had to undertake a merciless struggle against him, encountering him ceaselessly and striking at him pitilessly.

A singular thing, which cannot fail to astonish, is the identity of the descriptions. The demonologists are in agreement, almost in all details, as to the conditions of the pact, of the evil-doing, of the Sabbath. The minute congruence of the circumstantial accounts leaves one stupefied. Not only do they not suggest any doubts as to the foundation of the whole thing, which can be understood at a pinch, but, further, they enter into no arguments save about secondary points. When any objection was raised, it was precisely in the unanimity of opinions that they found a decisive argument :

> It is as clear as the day, says Daneau, a jurist of the sixteenth century, that the world has perceived, in all times and in all ages, that there are sorceries and enchantments done by the art and suggestion of the Devil. For why and how is it that the laws that were made in those times should have uttered and established penalties against sorcerers, if there were none in those times ? No law is made concerning a thing which has never been seen or known : for law holds cases and crimes which have never been seen or perceived as things impossible, and which do not exist at all.[1]

To take the existence of human law for the necessary effect of a certain cause, when this cause is in the domain of metaphysics, might seem a singularly contestable argument. More weighty is the argument drawn from the actual words uttered in the judicial trials by the agents of the reprobated cult.

Whether we take the avowals of the witches of Flanders or those of the witches of the land of Labour, whether we go to Savoy or to Picardy, everywhere the accused, from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries, admit that they have practised the same sorceries and that they have had the same relation with the Demon. The reports of the trials seem modelled one upon the other, and yet, nevertheless, no relation, no connection was possible between all these wretches who were accused of magic and sorcery. They did not know one another. Almost all were illiterate peasants, incapable of having read or known about what was going on elsewhere ; the transmission of an oral tradition cannot explain such a perfect identity. Del Rio, a learned expert, said of the witches that they were for the most part idiots. Montaigne, who was curious about everything, and who had wished to look into the matter " without letting his judgment be bound by prejudice," declared with pity that he had " rather have ordered Hellebore for them than Hemlock."

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[1] Lambert Daneau, *Deux nouveaux traités très utiles pour ce temps*, 1579. Second point.

What better proof could there be of the truth of the orthodox doctrine than this constant repetition of the same descriptions by men and women who did not know one another, and who, nevertheless, revealed the same proscribed abominations ? Magistrates and theologians felt all doubt vanish ; every new trial brought new proofs to confirm them in their opinions.

The argument deserves to be examined ; it is by subjecting it to a full criticism that it is possible to discover how the Christian Devil took on his definite form.

A first observation is, that the Satan described in the sixteenth century can be only a very recent creation. Apart from the fact that the religious texts noticed in the preceding chapter do not admit of the existence of the classic picture before a recent past, the Devil is pictured in a form which does not go back beyond the Middle Ages, as he is seen sculptured on the capitals of the cathedrals. He is cloven-footed, hairy, and crooked, and is accompanied by little Devils made in his own image.

A second observation is deduced from examination of the diabolic ritual. One cannot fail to conclude, from any fairly close study, that every detail is supported by some passage of Scripture which justifies it or explains it. Each happening becomes admissible in the measure in which the Old and the New Testament are admissible. If we consider, however, that demoniac manifestations are very little defined in Scripture, and that, on the contrary, the demoniac doctrine of modern times abounds in precise details, one is led to the opinion that it is the product of the work of glossators and clever masters of erudition. It could not have been born save in the minds of men conversant with religious symbolism, for everything in it is an image or a symbol.

This first consideration allows us to discover fairly exactly the almost mechanical formation of the classic doctrine of the Christian Devil. The inquisitor, anxious to pursue the Demon, but somewhat at a disadvantage because it was necessary to find the demonstration of demoniac phenomena in a domain where experiment seems, at first sight, impossible, sought, by a remarkable effort of reasoning and dialectic, what the Demon could and must be. The inquisitor created the sacrilege when he came to cast it out ; one can almost say, in his desire to attack it, he imagined it.

It is the astonishing fixity of the descriptions which leads one to think that the tale told by the sorcerer to the judge might well be a creation of the judge's own imagination.

This assertion needs further illumination.

It is quite certain that, the existence of the Devil being admitted and undeniable, it was necessary, in the absence of the revelation which is found at the origin of the greater number of religious beliefs, to reconstruct his personality, to discover his power, and to describe his misdeeds by a critical study of the existing texts.

The cult of Satan contrasted with the cult of God could be nothing save sacrilegious, and, if we examine what sacrilege is, it is obvious that in its most elementary form its essence consists in reversing the sacred doctrines and ceremonies. The Devil who struggles with God cannot but take in all things the opposite position to God. Demoniac veneration is necessarily the contrary of divine adoration.

Thus, very simply, the theologians were able to erect the scaffolding of the monstrous monument of impiety which they imputed to the sorcerer. Baptism blots out original sin, the Devil blots out baptism ; the man of God does good and is charitable, the demoniac does evil and sows hatred ; God lets fall grace upon His subjects, the Devil procures them malefices ; the great mystic knows ecstasy, the Devil possesses men ; the good Christian makes a covenant with God, the sorcerer makes a pact with the Devil ; the Mass is the sacrifice acceptable to the divinity, the Demon insists upon an identical, derisory sacrifice where everything is done in hatred of the divinity ; and when God produces miracles, Lucifer works wonders.

A slow but a detailed and an able creation, the cult of Satan is clothed in a certainty and a fixity all the greater because, modelled upon religion, which is established firmly, it imitates it in grotesque likeness, and never departs far from it.

Each demonologist brings his tribute in good faith. The stories which are told become transformed. They are analysed, they are admitted or rejected, according to whether they are or are not contrary to Scripture, which is the source of all truth.

Furthermore, it was an imperious duty to undertake researches, the better to defend and warn the faithful ; it was necessary to find out what the tempter could demand. Every religious symbol was examined, weighed, analysed with minute care ; its obverse was sought, and imputed to Lucifer. Imagination having thus been set in motion, nothing could stop it. It is obvious that the greater the wickedness newly discovered, the more it was deemed likely to approach truth. The very enormity of the crime revealed made it seem all the more probable.

The Devil, it must not be forgotten, is evil for evil's sake, and everything must contribute to make his cult abject. Satan desires unbridled orgies in which his devotees wallow in the most infamous lewdness. The greater the shame and the filth, the more complete is the triumph of the fallen angel.

Thus was constructed a methodical doctrine of sacrilege. A few crimes of madmen like Gilles de Rais, a few examinations of diseased persons who presented more or less characteristic sexual disequilibrium, served as confirmations of the works of the erudite.

But, while the diabolic tradition was being established by pure reason, this tradition, it must be said, long remained purely bookish and symbolic. Deduced from the divine symbolism, transported to satanic territory, it was at first full of attraction and poetry. The inverse of divine mysticism, demoniac mysticism always preserved, strangely but brightly, its lyrical character.

The cult of Satan is a cerebral deviation into evil, wherein everything is combined in order to obtain the greatest possible evil. The witch, a true fury, appears trembling, perverse, lewd, but full of greatness in her abominations. She is the symbol of sacrilege, incest, and crime. She is frantic in horror, frenzied in hideousness. An accursed delirium possesses her. She defiles her body with all manner of filth, her soul with every ignominy ; she is a voluntary victim who ruins herself throughout eternity the better to insult God.

This sacrilegious beauty is itself proof that the doctrine taught greatly surpassed the meagre understanding of the sorcerers.

The disordered fantasy of mystic minds constructed the drama. Just as an imprudent confessor can, by dangerous questions, awaken the unsuspecting mind of a child to certain regrettable knowledge, so in the same way the urgent inquisitor, sure of himself, firm in his faith, interrogates as to what he knows or believes he knows ; the questions which are asked teach the most ignorant.

The doctrine took on its definitive form in the fifteenth century. The Bull *summis desiderantes* had been promulgated in 1484. It designed by name the two inquisitors, Institoris and Sprenger, of the Order of the Preaching Friars, and charged them to proceed with firmness.

It was through them that, for the first time, the consensus of established opinion was written down. In 1489 there was published at Cologne the *Malleus Maleficarum*,[1] which constitutes the code of witchcraft. Right at the beginning the learned authors set out the reasons for their work ; they complained that doctors and priests had had the shamelessness to proclaim that there were no witches, and to maintain that those who were treated as such were diseased or insane persons, and deserved rather care in hospital than punishment.

The University of Cologne, which was charged with the *approbatur*, showed that the growth of the evil came from the fact that :

> Many spiritual directors and preachers of God's word dared, publicly, in their sermons to the people, to affirm and assert that there are no witches and magicians capable of harming any creatures by any

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[1] Available in an English translation, with most learned notes and introduction by the Reverend Father Montague Summers.

sort of operation, and, as a result of these thoughtless sermons, the secular arm found itself deprived of strength to punish such people.

This is overwhelming proof of the lateness of the belief in witchcraft in the Church itself.

The *Malleus Maleficarum* was a work of fundamental importance, frequently reprinted, and constantly consulted and quoted. It served as the basis and point of departure for all the other books. It is to it that we must go to find the solution of every question of principle. With it the true doctrine is established. One may say that the other authors only spread and developed the teaching of Sprenger. The great days of witchcraft truly begin with this redoubtable theologian. A century later, and imitating him, Lancre in the land of Labour, Michaëlis in Avignon, Remy in Lorraine, Boguet in Franche-Comté and in Burgundy, nets in the peasants and their women pell-mell. They interrogate ferociously, according to the principles of the recognised doctrine, and the sorcerers weep and groan and avow their crimes. A wind of madness blows. They answer the questions that are put to them sweating with fright and their teeth chattering. Each avowal, which was imposed upon, and extorted from, them, constitutes a new proof which adds certitude to belief. Each judge possesses a manual like the *Controverses magiques* of Del Rio. The questions are the same in all the trials, the torture makes the answers identical ; that is the explanation of the identity of the replies and avowals.

Overwhelmed by pain, the accused speak, relate everything, exaggerate. It is a concert of circumstantially supported avowals each of which is imposed upon the accused, and all of which are the same, conformable to the dreams of the judges.

The sorcerers call for the stake, which must be their supreme agony, but they seek to avoid, by the profusion of their avowals and confessions, the horrible torments of the torture, which crushes their bones while provisionally respecting the life which nothing can save.

The Demon and his cult were imagined and created according to the laws of a logical reasoning. The trial which constituted, if one may put it so, the experiment designed to verify the hypothesis of the theologians seemed to be its definite proof : what better argument could one have than the accused's confession ? By insensible degrees the cause was taken for the effect. It was no longer noticed that the interrogation of the sorcerer was only a confirmation of the theory set forth and deduced from study of the sacred texts. On the contrary, it became accepted that the declarations of the accused had served to establish the doctrine.

> There is nothing more certain [says Boguet] than that the sorcerers gather together ; for this reason : that otherwise it would be impossible for them to agree so well in what they relate about their Sabbaths, or even that they have several in divers places : we see how they all *unanimously* record the offerings of candles, the kisses, the dances, the couplings, the banquets, and other like things which they abominably practise in their assemblies.[1]

And Lancre, similarly, thus expresses himself :

> Now if the transportation to the Sabbath were not true, how is it that two thousand children of Labour being presented to the Devil by certain women whom they name by their names and their surnames, of whom the greater number have been put to death as witches and the rest are about to be, maintain this transportation without ever varying or confusing one with another ?

This illusion endured so long, and was so amplified by the successive works of the demonologists, that the secrets of the Christian Devil appeared to many to have been revealed to men by the howlings of the possessed and the confessions of criminals.

The truth is that the whole diabolic doctrine was born in the subtle brain of erudite theologians. Eminent symbolists and mystic poets, they first created, then plucked, the most perverse of the flowers of evil, to decorate with its very perversity the most august grandeur of God. They raised divinity yet higher by plumbing the depths of the abyss sunk at its feet.

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[1] Boguet, *Discours des sorciers* (1610), chap. xv.

These men, severe, hardened, and chaste, did not draw back before the evocation of any infamy or lewdness whatsoever. They created the horrible the better to adore the beautiful, and it was by the fires of the stake that they lit up their symbols in suffering and in death.

CHAPTER IV

THE DEVIL

Imagination was given free rein when it was a matter of picturing the Devil. It did not appear doubtful to the demonologists that Satan could manifest himself materially to men. From the time of Genesis he had taken on the appearance of the Serpent, and his interventions in human affairs had been numerous throughout the course of history.

The descriptions are very diverse, but their diversity did not confuse belief, since the Devil, a subtle rogue, necessarily had to bow to the exigencies of the hour and to appear now as a terrible master, now as a seducer, and again as a scarecrow.

And, besides the Devil himself, we must not forget, further, that Lucifer was accompanied in his rebellion by a pretty large number of angels, who all, with him, suffered the humiliating fall. Thus the Demons are legion, and if the master is multiple in the forms of his manifestation, his servants are no less so.

Jean Wier[1] had made an inventory of the known Demons, and he arrived at this conclusion, which was not contradicted by the demonologists : that the diabolic monarchy comprised 72 Princes and 7,405,926 Devils divided into 1,111 legions of 6,666 each, " apart from errors of calculation."

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[1] *De Præstigiis* (Bâle, 1568).

" In very truth they are all wicked, evil, and mortal enemies of mankind," says Del Rio.[1] The same author adds that we ought, with Psellos, to distinguish six kinds, according to the places of their habitation. " Some in fire, others aerial, the third terrestrial, the fourth aquatic, the fifth subterranean, and the last who are called Lucifuges." To find so many Devils, a census had been made of all the divinities of the former cults, and there had been added the Demons of Scripture. Trithemius had drawn up a nomenclature which deserves to be quoted : " For there are several kinds of Demons, and they are distant from one another by certain degrees, by reason of the places into which they have been since the beginning hurled because of their rebellion."

The learned theologian, taking up the division into six, went into it more deeply and gave the following definitions[2] :

> The first kind is of those whom we called Igneous,

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[1] Op. cit., Liv. II., quest. 27, sect. ii.

[2] *Id.*, Liv. II., quest. 27, sect. ii.

because they wander around the utmost region of the air and have no kind of commerce on earth with the sorcerers, because they never come down.

Those of the second kind have the quality of aerial beings, because they roam through the air and remain very near us. These can descend, and, making for themselves bodies out of the thickest air, appear on occasion to men. They disturb the air, raising up storms and thunder, and altogether they batter into ruin poor humanity. They are moved by passion just like men, principally with pride and envy, and they let themselves be carried away into perturbation. They have not all a same form, but several, the which they often change, according to the variety of the affections which make them appear at the evocation of the Witches, or which urge them to harm and damage certain persons.

The Demons of the third kind are called Terrestrial, and we do not doubt at all that they were hurled from the sky to earth for their faults. Some of them dwell in the woods and forests and set snares for hunters, the others in the wide and open country lead travellers astray ; the rest, less rageful, choose to dwell obscurely among men.

The fourth kind of Demons bear the title of Aquatics, because they dwell around lakes and rivers, full of wrath, turbulent, roguish, and restless. They raise up storms on the sea, sink ships, and make many lose their lives in the midst of the waters. Every time that such Demons take on visible bodies, more commonly do they appear in the feminine sex . . . whence, the naiads, the nereids, and nymphs of the waters were by the ancients called by the feminine rather than the masculine sex.

The fifth kind is named Subterranean, because they dwell in grottos and caverns and the more inaccessible cavities of mountains. They are of a most spiteful nature, and principally attach themselves to those who sink wells and mines for metals or who seek treasures hidden in the earth. For the rest they are always ready to procure the ruin of the human race, either by fissures in the ground, or by abysms, by vomiting forth of flames, or by the crumbling of buildings. Of these Demons some are guardians of the treasures which the malice of men has hidden in the earth, and, for fear lest in the future they may return to the use of men, they guard them, and hide them, and often transport them from one place to another.

Finally, the sixth and last kind is that which we call Lucifuges, because they fly from the light of day, nor can they take on or make for themselves bodies save in the night.

Confronted by so great a number of Demons, with such diverse attributes, imagination had truly a choice of material for its pictures of them. A controversial question had been, to know whether the Devil appeared corporeally, or if he did not borrow some terrestrial body to manifest himself. For it had been objected that the Demon, an incorporeal being, having " no sort, nor face, nor particle of an informed animal, but only a simple nature," could not be seen by corporeal things.

Common opinion seemed to decide quite early that he could show himself in any form, sometimes incarnating himself in a body belonging to the realm of nature, sometimes " fantastically," by troubling and corrupting the imagination—

that is to say, as it would be explained to-day, by provoking hallucinations. The thing seemed possible, since Christ after His Resurrection had said to His disciples : " See my hands and My feet, that it is I Myself : handle Me, and see ; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold Me having."[1]

Thus we must distinguish carefully between the different apparitions. Often the Devil borrows a human or animal corpse, enters into it, and gives it an appearance of life by animating it. What we must, however, note is, that he seldom communicates warmth to it, and that the bodies remain raw and cold to the touch. Del Rio furnishes us with two curious examples, notably " of a soldier who, thinking to enjoy the desired embraces of a most excellently beautiful young girl, perceived at the end that he was only grasping a corpse of an animal, diseased and rotten."

At other times the Devil got for himself an elementary body of air, condensed and thickened until it became solid. Sprenger relates that small women were seen in the fields, and that, possessed by the Demon, they wriggled and agitated their bodies. The Devil, when he withdrew, left after him a very thick exhalation or vapour.

Crespet, a learned prior of the Celestines,[2] holds that the Demons " take rather a body of air by thickening it and forming it out of the vapours which rise from the ground, and they move it about at their pleasure."

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[1] Luke xxiv. 39.

[2] *Deux Livres de la Haine de Satan* (Paris, 1590), Bk. I., disc. 2.

Certain sorcerers of Nantes who were burnt at Paris confessed that, in order to give to the air this bodily solidity, two things were necessary to the Demons—to wit, a favourable wind and the full moon :

> for if the wind was contrary, they could not ally together the parts of the pure bodies, and if the moon was either waxing or waning, they could not form them for lack of matter, save very little ones.

It was when they had thus clothed themselves with a body formed from the elements that they were able to give themselves their terrible appearances, appearing as dwarfs or giants, for an author tells us : " I see nothing which can prevent them from doing this as much as they wish to : the facility with which the substance of the air dilates and thickens leads me to believe it."

Such were the means which seemed most certain to the gravest demonologists. But many of them did not bother about so much subtlety, and thought that if the Demons were not prevented, for some special reason, by a greater power—that is to say, God Himself—they could show themselves in whatever form they wished, and even take on a human form, " filled with all the graces and perfections which a perfect and gracious beauty requires."

Thus we get an innumerable number of descriptions : now Michaëlis[1] tells us simply that the Devil appeared to a melancholic woman in the appearance of a man dressed all in black, about twenty-five or thirty years old ; now Daneau[2] relates that he showed himself to a woman as a reddish dog or fox ; now Boguet[3] expounds that it resulted from the declarations of the accused that the Devil manifested himself as a dog, as a huge black cat, as a hen, as a bull ; now Crespet maintains that he transformed himself into a dragon, into a crow, into an owl, a wolf, a monkey, a snake, a toad, or a fly.

"In short," adds this last author, " he takes whatever shape or form that seems good to him." As a matter of fact, it was a fairly common opinion, and Le Loyer,[4] King's Councillor at the Court of Angers, a specialist in questions of apparitions, says, "Truly there is reason to compare the Devil and his angels to Proteus, god of the Egyptians, or to the Chameleon, because of their inconstance and instability of form."

Sometimes, even, the Devil presented himself in the appearance of inanimate objects. Le Loyer tells further :

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[1] *Discours des esprits*, schol. i. [2] Op. cit. [3] *Discours des sorciers* (1610).
[4] *Discours et histoire des spectres* (Paris, 1605).

St. Benedict having ordered his monks to dig and excavate in a certain place in their Monastery, they found there a wooden idol which they put in the kitchen to use it for the fire. The kitchen where the idol was seemed all at once to be embraced by fire, and they all ran up to extinguish it. There was none among all the monks who was not enchanted, except St. Benedict, who, seeing no fire, as did the others, admonished them, and, uttering prayers, dissolved the fog of the Devil's conjury, and the fire went up in smoke.

When the Demon had adopted a particular form, he sometimes kept it for a long time. Thus Bodin, in his *Refutations de Jean Wier*, recalls that the philosopher Cornelius Agrippa, who was suspected of sorcery, always went accompanied by a great black dog, to whom he gave even the hospitality of his bed. He called this dog *Monsieur*, and it was Satan in person.

The Devil's very character is to be polymorphous, and the descriptions of him which we possess vary infinitely. The Spirit of Evil, ever on the watch to convince and terrify and possess, showed himself " in the form of several animals in order to disguise himself, and sometimes in that of a man or of a woman the better to accommodate himself to the reach of those whom he wished to draw after him and who were going to worship him."

What we must conclude is that he was pictured under every form which pleased the popular imagination.

Often his simple incarnation in a known body seemed too simple. The usurpation of human and animal forms in order to appear to men and tempt them, did not satisfy minds avid for phantoms. In order to reveal himself to his subjects in all his infernal majesty, or in order to terrify good Christians, the Devil must have an appearance especially worthy of inspiring fear. Popular fantasy mingled in an astounding mixture everything that seemed terrifying or repugnant in the different beasts in whom he made his customary frequentation. Thus a more original picture was drawn, for :

> The Demons reveal themselves either in human bodies which are black, filthy, stinking, and redoubtable ; or at least with darkened brown and hairy faces, their noses either deformed, snubbed, or else outrageously aquiline, their mouths open and deeply caved, their eyes deep sunk and brightly sparkling, their hands and feet bent like a vulture's, their arms and legs thin and covered with hair, like the legs of goats or donkeys, their horned feet sometimes cloven and sometimes solid, finally the stature and proportion of their bodies always either too big or too little, and ill-made.[1]

But no apparition was more frequent, more certain, and more legitimate than that of a he-goat. In all times the goat has symbolised incontinence, and pagan traditions were at one with orthodox belief. The he-goat was mentioned by Scripture : " And they shall no more sacrifice their sacrifices unto the he-goats, after whom they go a-whoring."[1]

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[1] Del Rio, op. cit., II., quest. 28, sect. iii.

And it seemed reasonable that the Demon should make himself adored in the form of a beast, in opposition to Jesus, who had taken a human form. It was as a beast that John proclaimed the return of the Spirit of Evil in the Apocalypse.

It was the goat that St. Jerome found in the *Pilosus* of the prophet[2] ; it was the goat who was the symbol of the most filthy pleasures ; it was the goat whose head was sculptured as a sign of forced servitude in the gold and ivory of the pastoral crosier.

His apparition was obscene and terrible.

One of the authors who is most complete in his description of the Devil is Lancre, Councillor at the Parliament of Bordeaux, who was charged with the rooting out of the sorcerers in the land of Labour. He brought back from his expedition an exceptionally extensive documentation, which he published immediately after his return.[3]

> Some say that he is like a great dark tree-trunk, without legs and without feet, seated on a throne, and having in some sort the face of a huge and frightful

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[1] Lev. xvii. 7.

[2] St. Jerome, letter xliii.

[3] *Tableau de l'inconstance des mauvais anges et demons* (Paris, 1613).

man. Others, that he is like a great goat, having two horns in front and two behind ; and that those in front turn up on top like the peruke of a woman. But the common opinion is that he has only three horns, and that he has some sort of light in the middle one with which, on the Sabbath, he is accustomed to light up the proceedings and to give out fire and illumination. There has also been seen a certain species of bonnet or hat above his horns. In front his member is drawn out and hanging down, and he always shows it a cubit in length, and a large tail behind, and the shape of a face underneath, from which face he utters no word, but which serves him to give to be kissed by those whom it seems good to him, honouring certain wizards and witches, some more than others. Others say that in form he is a huge man, darkly clothed, and who does not wish to be seen clearly, for they say that he is all flaming and his face red as an iron straight from the furnace.

The Devil did not merely show himself ; often he conversed at the Sabbath and elsewhere with those to whom he appeared. The declarations of the sorcerers, gathered in the course of the trials, gave knowledge of his voice. It was in vain that certain theologians had maintained that the Demons, as pure spirits, could not utter words. They had observed, indeed, that words are made by the lungs, the palate, the tongue, and the teeth, and that the spirits have none of these. It was necessary to bow before experience when, out of the mouths of the possessed, Satan pronounced discourses and curses. Doubtless in these cases the Demon only utilised the vocal apparatus of someone else, but many avowals by the accused, who alleged that they had heard the Devil, allowed of no doubt. And in any case it would not seem very extraordinary that he could personally utter sounds, since everyone was convinced that he had spoken through the mouths of animals, who have no articulate language, or by the shameful parts of women. Thus Vair,[1] a Spanish theologian, enunciated the following principle :

> The Demons are able to feign sounds similar to the human voice, by which they explain what they want to say : and in spite of the fact that they have neither teeth, nor tongue, nor lungs, which are the instruments which form the voice, the fact is that they can imitate them artificially, and by this means, as by certain sounds, they feign and disguise the resemblance of a voice, the which they let articulately flow to the ears of the listener.

Thus the Devil did not, properly speaking, give utterance to a human voice, " but he produced in the air certain sounds resembling the human voice."

It was a trembling, whispering, confused, feeble voice, " small, and as if uttered from the depths of a hogshead or through a broken pot."[2]

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[1] *Trois Livres des charmes, sorcelages, et enchantements* (Paris, 1583), Bk. II., chap. xi.

[2] Del Rio, op. cit., II., quest. 28, sect. iii.

CHAPTER V

THE COVENANT WITH SATAN AND THE MARK OF THE DEVIL

After the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the Devil may be said to have been intimately concerned in the daily life of the Christian world. He prowled about mankind to ruin it, he penetrated people's inmost secrets, he was ever on the watch to gratify desires in order to attract to himself weak souls. He is met with endlessly in literature. He is the subject of conversation and of sermon ; he is feared, but, too, tricks are played on him. If he himself is the eternal liar who falsifies and deceives, in his turn he is the subject of attempts to deceive him and to catch him in his own snares. It is a perpetual struggle of ruse and stratagem. The Demons take on the most unexpected forms, and are able to adapt themselves to every sort of circumstance. Ronsard, speaking of the northern Devils, thus expresses himself :

> On dit qu'en Norvège ils se louent à gages :
> Et font comme valets des maisons les mesnages,
> Ils pansent les chevaux, ils vont tirer du vin ;

Ils font cuire le rost, ils sérancent le lin,
Ils filent la fusée, et les robes nettoyent
Au lever de leur maistre, et les places baloyent.

['Tis said that in Norway they hire themselves out :
And do the work of menservants,
They groom the horses and draw wine ;
They cook and roast, they dress the flax,
They feed the spindles, and clean the clothes
For their master's rising, and sweep all clean.][1]

However, the Prince of Darkness was not usually so debonair. It is his relations with the magicians which we must examine, to see him properly at work. It is there that he takes on his true and terrible form.

The popular opinion was that the sorcerer bound himself to the Devil by a covenant. The idea came first from Scripture. For it is there said concerning the enemy within and the enemy without : " We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement ; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us ; for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves." To which the Lord made answer : " The hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding-place. And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand ; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it."[1]

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[1] *Hymnes*, i. 7.

And the notion of a covenant is similarly to be found in the Demon's words as he shows Jesus all the kingdoms of the earth : " All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me."[2]

Besides, it seemed reasonable that a real covenant should be made with Satan. The Devil desires from his subjects an act of sincere piety and a declaration of fidelity : *Dæmones divinis honoribus gaudent.*[3] Thus the first care of the apprentice-sorcerer would be to achieve this covenant.

> The compact which the magicians make with the Demon is the mainstay from which all the magic operations depend ; in such manner that every time it pleases a magician to do anything by means of his art, he must, expressly or else implicitly, pray to the Demon, that, according to the agreement made between them, he shall intervene and secretly work his desire.[4]

Thus the covenant was of capital importance ; it was by it alone that the sorcerer was able to obtain his infernal powers.

A curious brochure which appeared at

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[1] Isa., xxviii. 15-18.

[2] Matt. iv. 9.

[3] St. Augustine, *City of God*, Bk. X.

[4] Del Rio, op. cit., Bk. II., quest. 4.

Bordeaux during the seventeenth century shows very clearly the objective and obligations of the contracting sorcerer.[1]

> His A B C and first article is to deny God, the creator of all things, to blaspheme the most holy and Individuated Trinity, to trample underfoot all the mysteries of the Redemption, to spit in the face of the Mother of God and all the Saints.
>
> The second is, to abhor the name of Christian, to renounce the Chrism, the baptism, the approbation of the Church, and the Sacraments.
>
> Thirdly, to sacrifice to the Devil, to make a covenant with him to adore him, to render faithful homage to him, to commit adultery with him, to give up to him innocent children, and to recognise him as his benefactor.

Satan insisted specially on the renunciation of baptism, which blots out original sin and which acts as the safeguard of humanity. Tertullian, in his study of this question, had stated definitely, *Hic quoque studium diaboli recognoscimus res Dei æmulantis cum et ipse baptismum in suis exercet*, and all the authors were agreed in noting the Demon's profound hatred of the first sacrament : " because in baptism our souls are betrothed and espoused to Jesus Christ, and in it we receive from him the ring of Faith, and with that we expressly renounce the Devil and all his works. And in baptism, too, exorcism is carried out against

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[1] *The Truthful Account of the Strange and Prodigious Things which happened at the Execution of Three Sorcerers and Magicians carried out in the Town of Limoges on 24th April,* 1630.

Satan and that is why it is more necessary to deny baptism than any other Sacrament and, from of old, he has always desired to have his own baptism in order to be the Ape of God."[1]

For truly, not only did the sorcerer have to renounce his baptism, but, further, his pact with the Devil conferred upon him the simulacrum of a new sacrament.

We have already pointed out how this diabolic institution had to be, necessarily, modelled upon the inverse of the divine institution. In his work on baptism, Tertullian gives a clear demonstration of this when he says: "We observe the studiousness and curiosity of the Devil who imitates God in his works, seeing that he also carries out baptism for his abettors."

Thus, in some sort as a homage, but also in derision, the Demon obliged the sorcerers to be re-baptised in his honour, and insisted that his servant should once again take a godfather and godmother and choose a new name. Many of the sorcerers who were arrested asserted that they had two names, and some of them, who had returned to true religion and were in the hands of justice, asked to be baptised anew.

The chrism also was held in horror by Beelzebub. According to Raëmonden,[2] Pope Fabian declared it a sovereign antidote against the Devil. Boguet relates that certain sorcerers who had changed themselves into wolves killed children and devoured them, excepting however those parts which had been anointed with the holy chrism. Thus the Devil, who made them renounce baptism, also, as soon as he had concluded his covenant with his instruments, insisted that they should " draw their nails across their foreheads to scar and take away all trace of the unction."

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[1] Michaëlis, *Discours des esprits* (1613), schol. iii.

[2] *Antichrist*, chap. xxxix.

From all this the capital importance of the covenant can be seen ; according to the demonologists, it could be carried out in different ways. In the first place the covenant could be carried out explicitly ; in which case the Devil sometimes appeared in corporeal form, and, before witnesses, received the homage and oath of the sorcerer, and sometimes the covenant was in the form of a written pledge.

Several of these pledges have come down to us. That of Gaufridi, who was burnt at Aix-en-Provence for having seduced a young girl called Magdelaine de la Palud, is especially characteristic :

> I, Louys Gaufridy, renounce all those benefits, spiritual as much as corporeal, which could in any way be conferred upon me by God and the Virgin Mary and all the saints in Paradise, particularly my patron saint, John Baptist, as also St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. Francis,

and I give my body and soul to Lucifer before whom I stand, and all the goods that I shall ever have (save always the benefit of the sacraments touching those who receive them).

And thus do I sign and witness it.

After three days the Devil answered :

By the virtue of thy breath, thou wilt inflame with love of thyself all the girls and women whom thou shalt desire to possess, provided that this breath reaches their nostrils.

Not every covenant was so simple. Lancre tells the story of a woman who was burnt by decree of the Parliament[1] of Bordeaux who had written the document "in menstrual blood, and so horribly that to look at it made one feel horror." Another sorcerer who was executed at the same period had it written on a two of hearts taken from a pack of playing-cards, "as if to show that one cannot have two hearts to divide between two masters."[2]

Sometimes, too, the covenant could be made by the intermediary of a third party, himself a sorcerer, who undertook the commission, "when he who was about to covenant feared the look or speech of the Demon."

In the second place, the covenant could be made tacitly :

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[1] The *parlements* were bodies of mixed judicial and other functions, established in the chief cities of France.

[2] *L'Incrédulité et mécréances du sortilège pleinement convaincue* (1622).

> . . . and at least they make tacit alliance and implicit covenant, to employ the terms of the theologians, with the aforesaid little master, and none the less for this they seem to consent in fact by this first detestable transaction, since in their works they use the signs, characters, charms, and superstitions which the others use and which are invented by the Devil, the which tend to do that which God does not require and which nature does not teach.[1]

It must not be supposed that Satan was satisfied by such an agreement ; normally he insisted upon the giving up of some material object which belonged to the person concerned. It is an ancient and very primitive tradition that by giving up a part of oneself one binds oneself more strongly. Perhaps the origin of the Jewish circumcision is to be found in this belief. Traces of this superstition are to be seen in the Bible, when the prophets of Baal, in order to establish their divinity, incised themselves until their blood ran.[2]

Often the Demon required only a piece of stuff torn from the sorcerer's garment ; sometimes he demanded a little blood. A sick man having, according to Lancre, appealed to the Devil :

> the latter appeared to him and said to him that, if he desired that he should be permitted to heal him and free him from the sorcery, he must go bail to him in

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[1] Nodé, *Déclamation contre l'erreur exécrable des maléficiers* (1578), chap. xix.

[2] Kings, xviii. 28.

two and a half toes of his foot, the which he promised. At the end of eight days he took from him the flesh of the big and the second toe and the half of the third toe of the left foot, which were two and a half toes, without causing him any suffering. . . . Six months after, the bones of the said toes of the foot having become fleshless, dried up and finally fell from him painfully in disease. And he buried them and set them under earth at the foot of a tree.[1]

Satan not only had his requirements ; he also imprinted his mark. The brand of the sorcerers was the subject of much study, and its discovery on the body of an accused constituted a proof of exceptional gravity.

Here again the demonologists saw a caricature of religion. " By such means he wishes to compare himself to God," says Lancre, and they also quoted this saying of Tertullian : " *Ipsas quoque res divinorum mysteriorum emaculatur.*"

And it was in Scripture, and especially in the Apocalypse, that the foundations of belief were to be discovered. And, in fact, it is there written : " If any man worshippeth the beast and his image, and *receiveth a mark on his forehead*, or upon his hand . . ."[2] ; and again, " And it became a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had *the mark of the beast* " [3] ; and, further, " The beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought the signs in his sight, wherewith he deceived them that had received *the mark of the beast.*"[1]

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[1] *Inconstance*, op. cit., III., disc. i.

[2] Rev. xiv. 9.

[3] Rev. xvi. 2.

The discovery of zones without feeling on the bodies of the arrested sorcerers made it impossible to have any doubt as to the reality of the Demon's action.

Natheless, certain doctors had suggested doubts. They were recalled brutally enough to what was thought to be reason.

> They say that it is hard to distinguish the marks of a natural scar, such as that made by a nail, or a natural impetigo, whereby they clearly show that they are not good doctors. . . .
>
> As for the other maladies which might have something in common with the marks of sorcerers, there are paralysis and leprosy, which make parts of the body without feeling—but if they are pricked give forth a liquid : warts, as also corns, are without feeling and dry, but they are raised above the surface of the skin, whilst the mark is full on a level with it ; the scabs and itches and eruptions and other diseases of the skin do not penetrate beneath it, and, except in the case of lepers, feeling there remains exceedingly sensitive.
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> Moreover, the marks of the sorcerers are distinguished from every kind of malady which customarily supervene in the human body.[2]

These marks were, as we have said, characterised by complete lack of feeling. It must be added that they were cold. From Aristotle, who had asserted that animals live by their natural heat and humidity, it had been deduced that the death of these tissues, which give forth no liquid when pricked and which are sometimes " as hard and as difficult to pierce as boiled leather," could have no natural cause.

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[1] Rev. xix. 20. [2] Fontaine, *Des Marques des sorciers* (Lyon, 1611).

Their description varies as much as the nervous manifestations or the physical malformations, which were their causes, can themselves vary. Sometimes they appeared in the form of the track or paw of a hare, the foot of a toad or of a small black dog. A woman who was burnt at Besançon bore it " a little lower than the navel, raised on the skin in the same way as the pout of a chicken or pigeon." Another woman had " a hollow in the left thigh, as large as the head of those square nails which are used for cobbling shoes."

Sometimes they were hidden under the tongue, in the lips, under the eyelids, in the nose, or under the hair. " They imprinted themselves in parts so filthy that it was disgusting to look for them there."

There was a very widespread opinion that the mark of the Devil was in the eye, and any blots on the iris were carefully examined.

" In short," Boguet concludes, " it is said that there is no sorcerer who is not marked in some part of his body."

This last assertion was not universally admitted.

In certain very characteristic cases of magic no mark had been found. From these cases it had been thought possible to deduce that the Devil did not mark those of whom he was certain. But, generally speaking, little account was taken of this assertion, which did not seem reasonable, and it was thought simply that the Devil could, when he wished to let a sorcerer escape from the rigour of justice, efface his own mark at the time of the examination.

Let us add that, to avoid even this eventuality, Satan buried his marks and hid them " in such parts and places of the body that it would be necessary to tear the body to pieces to find them." Thus was explained the failure of certain magistrates who were unable to discover the visible signs of the sin.

Such were the rigorous conditions of the covenant with the Devil. There remained one important question, which for a time divided the demonologists : what was the value of the contract ?

The sorcerer pledged himself to appallingly serious conditions.

> This convention made with the Devil contains a covenant furnished with conditions so long and so compulsive that besides that thereby a man is held in it for his whole life and rigorously, also it has so much influence for what concerns the other world that in no

> way can eternal penalties be avoided unless the covenant is broken during this mortal life, which cannot be without great grace from God.[1]

But if, without any possible contradiction, the sorcerer is to be considered as definitively bound, can the word of the Demon be trusted—he who in his very essence is a liar, and avid to deceive ?

In general it was not so believed. On the contrary, it was taught that he was free to keep the covenant or to break it and to deceive. Doubtless, more often than not he kept his promises, but this was for fraudulent purposes and without any obligation, in order to keep the magicians in his service, and to persuade others that there was some advantage in coming to him.

> From such covenantings no mutual obligation is born, and thus the condition of those who make them is most unequal and dissimilar ; for the men vow themselves to eternal death through sin, making themselves of the Devil and submitting themselves to the most enormous servitude of the Demon until they return to the grace of God ; but for that they acquire no right nor power over the Devil and for that no virtue passes upon the marks or signs which they are obliged to use. He feints, cunning as he is, to work under necessity, yet all the time it is really voluntarily.[2]

It can be readily understood that in this atmosphere of trickery the sorcerer himself tried to have recourse to lying. Often he covenanted, but with mental reservations. He gave himself up to the Devil with the inner thought of returning to God after he had slaked his passions.

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[1] Lancre, loc. cit.

[2] Del Rio, loc. cit.

We may say that between Lucifer and his servant a constant hidden struggle goes on to find out who can deceive the most ably. In truth, the Devil and the sorcerer never play the game according to the rules.

CHAPTER VI

THE MANIFESTATIONS OF THE DEVIL AND THE POWER OF THE SORCERERS

It is a general opinion that the Devil cannot work miracles. A miracle, indeed, changes the laws of nature, which appertains to God alone, the creator of all things. Thus the Demon is reduced merely to performing prodigies which make men marvel, but are actually carried out by natural means, which men cannot use because they are unheard-of or quite unknown.

A typical example of a prodigy is provided by Del Rio.[1] A witch of Trèves planted a hollow stick in the wall of a neighbouring stable. All the milk of the cows flowed away through it. The truth is, the theologian explains, that the Demon himself milked the cows and carried the milk to the stick to make people believe in a miracle.

The miracle can be distinguished from the prodigy by many characteristics. A miracle has as its result some good effect, such as the salvation of the soul or the healing of the body. A prodigy leads to an ill end, like prying curiously, or other things contrary to right manners and the true faith. The prodigies performed by the Demons are often defective in some detail ; miracles are perfect in everything, like the works of God. Finally, prodigies vanish away as soon as the miracle appears ; this is what happened to the rods of the magicians of Egypt which were devoured by the rod of Moses. And it must also be remarked that miracles are worked by sincere and serious invocation of God, but prodigies by prayers or symbols which are always " absurd, obscure, vain, ridiculous, or superstitious."

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[1] Op. cit. II., quest. 12.

Further, we must add that orthodox doctrine teaches that the prodigies themselves can only be realised by divine permission.

Thus the power of the Demon is limited.

When we study the form of his manifestations, and the quality of his prodigies, a fundamental distinction must immediately be drawn. Sometimes the Devil acts by himself ; sometimes he acts through the intermediary of sorcerers with whom he has concluded the covenant, and to whom he procures the means to use maleficent powers. These are two different manifestations which must not be confounded. The personal intervention of the Devil among men is a dogma. The evil spell of a sorcerer is, on the contrary, merely a generally accepted, but still arguable, belief. He who should deny possession would be a heretic ; he who denies the power of evil spells is only discussing, rather pointlessly, a current, but in no wise obligatory, opinion.

The notion that the Devil seeks to exercise his tyranny upon the human creature by obsession and possession is a very ancient one. Twice in the Book of Samuel an evil spirit, unloosed by God's permission, enters into Saul.[1] The New Testament, in especial, contains numerous and circumstantial accounts of cases of demoniac possession. Sometimes the possessed are deprived of sight and speech,[2] sometimes they are stricken with a muscular contraction which nothing can unloose,[3] sometimes the Demons produce paralysis and epilepsy.[4] The possessed who were brought to Jesus foamed at the mouth, ground their teeth, rolled on the ground, were dumb, or uttered howls.[5] Lucifer spoke through their mouths[6] ; sometimes, even, several Demons seized on a single body ; Mary Magdalene was possessed by seven of them,[7] and in another case so many Devils had installed themselves that they called themselves *legion.*[8]

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[1] Sam. xvi. 14–16, xix. 9.

[2] Matt. xii. 22 ; Luke xi. 14.

[3] Luke xiii. 11, 16.

[4] Matt. iv. 24 ; Mark iii. 11 ; Luke vi. 18.

[5] Matt. xvii. 14 ; Mark ix. 16, 17 ; Luke ix. 39.

[6] Mark i. 24, 34 ; Matt. viii. 29.

[7] Mark xvi. 9.

[8] Mark v. 9 ; Luke viii. 30.

These same characteristics are repeated in the possessed of Loudun and Louviers.

The question was often asked why God allowed the Devil thus to torment creatures who had in no way covenanted with him, and who most often were good Christians. In the whole body of the works of the theologians five reasons can be discovered. In the first place, it was said, some of the possessed had been vowed to the Devil from their infancy by relatives or neighbours, and, although they themselves knew nothing of it, they were servants of Satan. Next, possession was sometimes a punishment for sins actually committed by the possessed. Sometimes, as an exorcised Devil had himself stated to Hubert, a Bishop of England, possession was the penalty for original sin.[1] Finally, it was also thought that the purpose of possession was to try men and to make apparent the virtues of the divine institutions. A certain virgin of Laon was rendered demoniac solely to give a proof of the virtue of the Eucharist, by which she was delivered.

The accounts given by demoniacs are so numerous, the trials which arose from questions of possession have been described and reprinted so often, that it seems superfluous to repeat them again. What will perhaps be more interesting is an enumeration of the signs by which true possession was recognised. The theologians had their symptoms and the doctors had theirs. Generally they worked together.

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[1] Maldonat, *Traité des anges et démons* (1616).

Sammarinus, in his *Traité Sacerdotal*, in the book on exorcism, states that the symptoms which, for a theologian, denote a demoniac are :

1. If he who is the object of suspicion cannot continue to eat goat's flesh for a space of thirty days : but I believe, he adds, that this sign is more appropriate to epileptics.
2. If his face is frightful, his eyes terrible, and his countenance hideous.
3. If he feigns to be mad, and the strength and size of his body continually grow and augment.
4. If he cannot pronounce the holy name of Jesus or any other holy one ; or else if he cannot say the Psalms, *Miserere mei Deus*, and *Qui habitat*, or the Gospel of St. John, which begins *In principio erat verbum*, and other like things.
5. If he speaks in a language, be it Greek, Latin, or any other, which he has never learnt ; or if he reads, writes, sings musically, or does any similar things which have never been taught to him.
6. If he becomes dumb, deaf, insane, blind, which are the signs contained in Holy Scripture.
7. If when he is exorcised he feels some kind of hot or cold wind, beyond reason, in his head, his shoulders, and his back ; and if he confuses and tortures himself and blasphemes.
8. If he has extraordinary pains and symptoms, as for example, if he is tormented by extreme throes in his entrails and internal parts, if he feels as if worms, ants, and frogs were running about from his head through

his whole body right to the soles of his feet, if his stomach is swollen, or else his neck or his tongue ; or if he feels that he is inflamed in his person.

9. If, by some secret cause, he is turned away from taking a part in divine service, or saying his prayers according to his wont, or from taking holy water, or from hearing God's Word.

10. If he is vexed or begins to curse when the priest lays on him the relics of the saints, the *Agnus Dei*, or else when in his conjurations he uses the sign of the cross, or makes use of consecrated objects, and, above all, the Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

11. If any blister appears on his tongue, the which disappears incontinently. If several appear, like small grains, the sign or index is yet more emphatic, because from them one may know the actual number of the Demons who are lodged in his body.

12. If he is agitated by a continual restlessness, to such an extent that he runs hither and thither, chiefly seeking for wild and solitary places.

13. If he finds himself impotent to use all of his limbs, and remains continually asleep and as if dead.

14. If he cannot abide the scent of roses or certain other perfumes.

15. If he says things very secret, and if he says them in contempt of God and with curses upon his neighbours.

16. If in the exorcisms he twists and bends and turns and displaces his body and limbs in another fashion from anyone could expect or hope from a creature.

17. Finally, if the Demon appeared to him in any form before there was question that he was possessed.

The doctors' signs were no less numerous, nor less precise. Here are those enumerated by Baptiste Codronchus :

1. If the disease is such that the doctors cannot discover nor diagnose it.

2. If it augments rather than diminishes when every possible remedy has been brought to bear on it.

3. If from the beginning it is accompanied by very grave symptoms and pains, against what is ordinary in other diseases, which grow little by little.

4. If it is inconstant and variable from day to day, from hour to hour, from period to period, and, besides, if it has in fact many things different from what is natural, although in appearance it seems to be similar.

5. If the patient cannot say in what part of his body he feels the pain, although he is very ill.

6. If he utters sad and pitiable sighs without legitimate cause.

7. If he loses his appetite and vomits, whatever meat he has taken ; if his stomach is as if narrowed and drawn in, and if there seems to him to be some mysterious heavy thing inside himself, or else if he feels some fragment which ascends the œsophagus in the wrong direction and afterwards returns to its first place, and which he cannot swallow when it is in the upper part, although by itself it suddenly slides back again.

8. If he feels sharp pains and other piercing sensations in the region of the heart, to such an extent that he thinks that he is being gnawed and dismembered into fragments.

9. If his arteries are seen to swell and tremble round his neck.

10. If he is tortured by some violent colic or pain in the kidneys, or if he has violent spasms in the ventricle ; or, again, if he feels a wind that is hot or cold beyond reason run over his stomach or other part of his body.

11. If he becomes impotent in the arts of Venus.

12. If he has a slight sweat, even during the night, when the air and the weather are cool rather than otherwise.

13. If the limbs and parts of the body are as if bound.

14. If he feels a great lack of strength throughout his whole body, with extreme languor. If he feels stupid in his mind, and takes pleasure in uttering stupidities and idiocies, as do melancholics. If he is afflicted with several sorts of fevers, which are a hindrance and an obstacle to the doctors. If he has convulsive movements which make him resemble those who are afflicted with the falling sickness. If his limbs stiffen in convulsions and spasms. If all the parts of his head are swollen, or else, if he has such a lassitude that he can scarcely move. If he becomes yellowish and cinder-coloured in his body, but especially in his face. If his eyelids are so narrowed that he can scarcely open his eyes, but nevertheless has very clear and transparent eyes. If he looks asquint. If he seems to see some phantasm or cloud shape.

15. If he cannot look at the priest fixedly, or if he has some trouble and difficulty in looking at him.

16. If he becomes troubled, terrified, or undergoes some notable change when he who is suspected of having given him his affliction comes into the place where he is.

17. Finally, if, when in order to heal the sickness, the priest applies certain holy unctions to his eyes, his ears, and the front or other parts of the body, these parts give forth some perspiration or undergo some other change.

And it must not be thought that these signs were the only ones. There were numerous others which appeared no less certain.

The Devil could, in addition, cause ecstasies and ravishments to men, veritable caricatures of those which we meet with in divine mysticism, but which resemble them to such an extent that sometimes Satan was successful in his deceits. An abbess of Cordova, Magdalena of the Cross, was for a long time thought to be animated by the divine spirit. It was only at the end of long years that it was perceived that the prodigies done through her intermediary, the ecstasies and ravishments she had undergone, were only the Devil's work.

Among the manifestations by which Lucifer troubled men, it was often told that he made the souls, if not the bodies, of the dead appear. But Tertullian, St. Isidore, St. Chrysostom, St. Augustine, and St. Thomas had combated this opinion. The souls of the saints are in the hands of God, those of the damned in hell, whence they cannot come forth without the permission of the Creator. They were convinced that, in order the better to deceive men, Satan borrowed the form of the dead and appeared instead of them. It was a prodigy and nothing more. God would never permit the dead to return on earth except in absolutely exceptional cases and in order to procure some great good, as, for example, we read in the life of St. Luthgard. A Franciscan had arranged with a Dominican friar that the first who died should come and tell his fate to the other. The Dominican, having passed from life to death, came back a few days after to describe the frightful torments of which he was the victim in hell. In order to show more vividly the nature of the eternal flames with which he was devoured, he touched a wooden table and it broke into flames immediately. The Franciscan, horrified, returned to the faith.

The question whether sorcerers could, by diabolic permission, work evil spells was, as we have said, a matter of argument. One was not forced to believe it. Del Rio, who does believe it, contents himself with saying, when he broaches the question : " Here I do not argue whether there is a power of casting evil spells[1]; I suppose it." He adds that he bases his opinion upon Holy Scripture, the contents and constitution of both branches of the law, the historians, the poets, and the common opinion and memory of all the centuries, which condemn those who say the opposite. And truly it seemed that nothing would delight the Devil more. However, to some it seemed strange that Satan should put himself at the service of the sorcerer and, in some sort, should work under his orders. To this it was answered that the Demon preferred the intermediary of magicians in order to offend against

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[1] See note on page 86.

God with a greater wickedness, by misleading His creatures, who had been washed in baptism, and that, further, he had thus greater chances of converting and recruiting men, many of whom would frequent sorcerers, yet feared any frequent encounter with Lucifer himself.

The definitions of witchcraft[1] are numerous. We may say that it is a magical and superstitious sign or effect : he who uses it is called *sorcerer*, and he who is injured by it is called *bewitched*. It is a sort of magic by which one person damages another with the aid of the Devil.

If the diverse species of witchcraft, which appear in such apparently multiple forms, are analysed, it is soon found that they can be reduced to three. The first kind induces sleep ; the second love ; the last, which is much the most varied, has as an objective the infliction of harm and injury.

It seemed to be important to be able to cause sleep. Sleep was induced in order to procure deceiving dreams, to bewitch, to be able to poison more easily, to seize and take away or kill little children, to make away, and, finally, to be befouled in filthy lewdness.

We must omit the extraordinary recipes

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[1] *Maléfice* in French. English usually speaks of witches and witchcraft, whereas French usually speaks of *sorciers* (masculine), which is here usually translated sorcerers, and *maléfice*, which is here usually translated spells, witchcraft, or malefices (plural), according to the context.

related by our authors in each case of witchcraft. They are picturesque, but toc numerous. As an example, we will give one, which was to procure sleep. It is furnished us by Nicolas Remy,[1] who had garnered it in Germany from the mouth of the sorcerers who were burnt in 1586. The witches use an aborted body whose shoulder they cut off, with the ribs and the right side, and then set it on fire. The extremities of the fingers are lit up, he says, like candles, and provide a violet and sulphurous flame. This flame lasts as long as the spell is to last, and when it is extinct the fingers are found to be just as intact as if they had not been on fire.

The second form of witchcraft was frequently employed. This was the love spell, or philtre. Sometimes it was administered internally, mixed with the ordinary meat and drink (the consecrated host and calamint were much used), sometimes it was administered externally.

In the latter case, strands were woven of leaves of roots, of reptiles, of feathers, of intestines, or the limbs of birds, fish, or other animals. Hidden and sewn into clothing, or under the head of the bed, or under the sill of the door, they had the reputation of provoking amorous passions. Sometimes, too—and it is a procedure which we shall meet again when we examine charms—the sorcerer manufactured little statues of wax, baptised them in the name of the person whom he wanted to charm, but with devotions to, and invocation of, the Devil, then made them melt in the fire in order to inflame, soften, and inflect to his authority the victim of his spell.

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[1] *Dæmonolatreiæ, Libri Tres* (Frankfort, 1597), II. iii.

In order to resist this charm, it was recommended to sleep on the bare floor, to wear a hair shirt, to flog oneself, and to practise fasting. It was prescribed that idleness, laziness, sleep, women, wine, fat living, gaming, dancing, music, and young children should be avoided. Finally, there should be meditation on death, the reading of good books, and the saying of prayers.

The third form of witchcraft is assuredly the one which included the most diverse forms. It comprised the infliction of harm or injury in every conceivable form, and imagination did not fail to discover an amplitude of methods thereto. Contrary to the love charms, which were composed mostly of warm, soft, agreeable things which were stimulating and apt to provide greater power in matters of concupiscence, the charms which were used to injure were cold, bitter, and contrary to nature ; they were called *venoms*.

Without dreaming of making a complete enumeration of these charms and spells, at least it is worth while to recall the principal ones, meaning by that those about which the majority of demonologists seem to be in agreement. In the first place, assuredly, is *fascination.* It worked by means of the five senses, but most often it was understood to be a spell which came from the eyes of the magician, and which attached itself like venom to the eyes of the victim. Its origin is to be found in the holy books.

St. Paul, exhorting the Galatians, cries : " Who did bewitch you ? "[1] But we must not think of fascination as capable of acting only upon the moral nature, for by it diseases were caused and catastrophes brought about. Certain beasts, like the basilisk, kill by their look, and in the same way the sorcerer reaches the bewitched by his glance. And, too, he can also fascinate by his breath, which generally stinks.

Fascination was difficult to ward off. First of all, it was necessary to avoid contact with and, above all, sight of the sorcerer. Lancre relates that in the district of Labour a small virile member in bone or in metal[2] was hung from the neck to secure preservation ; elsewhere a closed hand was carried whose thumb had been bent between two fingers. It was a gesture which was made when sorcerers passed by, and it is still used to-day in certain places.

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[1] Gal. iii. 1.

[2] *L'Incrédulité et mécréance du sortilège* (1622). Traité Second.

Another important sort of witchcraft was that which procured death by poisons. Sometimes they were to be drunk; sometimes merely objects which the victim would touch were coated with them. A witch of Gazal, in Piedmont, confessed that with forty others, both men and women—and notably the hangman—she had in 1536 made part of the population of the town perish by greasing the catches of the doors.

> They anointed him whom they wished to poison, while he was asleep, with an ointment containing several venoms, sometimes the thighs, sometimes the belly or the head, the throat, the stomach, the ribs, or other parts of the body, and so great is the strength and power of this ointment that little by little it enters into the flesh and finally penetrates right into the heart.[1]

We have numerous recipes for this venom. To confine ourselves to one, borrowed from the same Grilland : it was made of leaves, the tips or roots of grasses, of poisonous animals, fish, or reptile, and of metals, the whole boiled down and reduced either to a powder, or to a liquor, or to an unguent.

One of the commonest spells was that used to procure abortion. The victims had abortions, or sometimes remained in a perpetual bigness, "having the womb stopped up by spells." This stopping up of the womb by spells recalls the ancient form of modern hysteria, which John Wier observed in a large number of demoniacs. And certain witches similarly made nursing mothers lose their milk.

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[1] Grilland, quest. 3, No. 23.

One of the most important sorts of witchcraft, because its tradition goes back to the earliest days of humanity, is enchantment by images. Those who practised it in the sixteenth century were called archer-wizards, or makers of spellbound images. We have not sufficient space to trace the history of this curious belief. Let us recall merely that the spell-binder uses a little figure, generally of wax, and proceeds as in the love spells which we have described. And, to make the image more like the bewitched person, they sought to insert into the wax objects which had been parts of him, such as the parings of nails or hair. Then, piercing the image with needles, scratching it with thorns, it was thought that, sympathetically, the person himself would be injured. History is full of tales of bewitchments by images; Enguerrand de Marigny tried to make Count Charles of Valois perish in this way. At Paris, in 1574, a nobleman in whose house was found an image pierced in head and heart was executed. La Mole and Coconas tried to bring about the death of Charles IX by this means. Image-sorcery became widespread, and was particularly common in the days of the League.

The true archer-wizard adds sacrilege to homicide. He would strike the crucifix, preferably on Good Friday, and thus obtain from the Devil the power of killing as many men, however far away they were, as the times that he had struck the Saviour.

It may be said that every disease whose origin was not known, and which did not fall under the diagnosis of possession, was attributed to spells.

Apart from epilepsy, diseases of the stomach, paralysis, leprosy, withholding of urine, and certain constantly observed affections, which were often credited with diabolic origin, the extraordinary descriptions which have been transmitted to us, and which are to be found in all the accounts of the time in the form of " histories of wonders " cannot fail to astonish. If the narrators are to be believed, witchcraft could make thorns, bones, bits of wood, stones, bits of glass, needles, knives, nails, tangles of hair, cloth, pigs' bristles, etc., etc., enter into the body of the bewitched person, who passed them out " through the lower part."

Among these diseases one very grave question arose : that of lycanthropy. Was it possible for men to change themselves into werwolves, or was this transformation simply a disease, which gave the sorcerer or the bewitched the illusion of a transformation ? Opinion was divided. To change a man into a beast seemed to be contrary to the laws of nature, and consequently impossible to Lucifer. But, then, Nebuchadnezzar, who was changed into an ox,[1] was cited, and pell-mell and uncritically there were recalled the metamorphosis of Jupiter, that of the companions of Ulysses who were changed to swine by Circe, and the tales of Ovid and Apuleius. Paracelsus, Pomponacius, and Fernel were quoted : " the first doctors and philosophers of their time, who held that lycanthropy was a thing most certain, veritable, and indubitable."[2] Trithemius was quoted, who related the history of a Jew who changed himself into a wolf and made himself invisible whenever he wished. Other histories were no less convincing. In 1561 certain witches of Vernon gathered in an old château disguised as she-cats. Some resolute men who went after them there were assailed by the beasts. One man perished and several were wounded, but, to their great astonishment, the wounded cats who remained on the battle-ground changed into women when day broke.[3]

In 1588, in Auvergne, in a village situated two leagues from Apchon, a nobleman asked a hunter to bring him some game. At some little distance the hunter was attacked by a large wolf. He fired his arquebus without effect. Then they struggled body to body, and the hunter cut off one of the paws of the wolf with his knife, and the wolf fled. When he returned to the château, the hunter presented the paw to the nobleman, and was astounded to see that, during his return, it had changed into a human hand, ornamented with a golden ring, which the nobleman recognised as belonging to his wife. Calling her to him, he saw that she was hiding her arm. He drew it out, and perceived with horror that its hand had been cut off. The young woman had to admit that she was a lycanthrope. She was burnt at Riom.[1]

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[1] Dan. iv. 33.

[2] Bodin, *Demonomanie.*

[3] Bodin, *Demonomanie,* II. vi.

Despite these examples, which were highly competent to convince, it was thought quite early that lycanthropy was a disease, or, rather, that it was the result of a diabolic delusion.

> Those who are struck or touched with this species of frenzy come out at night from their houses howling like wolves, and they willingly remain, even till dawn, near graveyards . . . some of them bark like dogs, others try to bite people.[2]

The Devil, said Remy, Leloyer, Del Garzoni, Del Rio, Boguet, and Lancre, cannot transform either the body or the soul into that of a beast, but he can only, by an illusion or spell, persuade a person that he is an animal, and make him seem so to all the world.

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[1] Boguet, *Discours des sorciers,* chap. li.

[2] Taillepied, *Traité de l'apparition des esprits* (Paris, 1616), chap. iii.

A werwolf was arrested and tried in 1610. He was not condemned, but merely shut up in the monastery of the Strict Observance at Bordeaux. Lancre, who went to see him, has left a description which cannot fail to interest neurologists :

> I found that he was a young boy aged about twenty or twenty-one, of medium height, rather small than large for his age, his eyes haggard, small, deep sunken and black, distracted, by whose look he let it appear that he was as if ashamed of his disaster, and scarcely dared look the world in the face.
>
> He was not at all stupid. . . . He had very long and light teeth, larger than the ordinary and not at all protuberant ; they were half blackened because of his having thrown himself upon men and animals ; and his nails, too, were long, and some of them were completely black from the root right to the end, even that of the thumb of the left hand, which the Devil had forbidden him to gnaw. And those which were black one would have said had been half used up and were more sunken than the others, and further from their natural state, the which shows clearly that he had practised the craft of a werwolf and that he used his hands both to run with and to seize hold of children and dogs by their throats. . . .
>
> He had a wonderful aptitude for going on all fours when he first went into the monastery, and of jumping out of ditches as do animals. . . . He leapt as dexterously and jumped as lightly as any hare. . . .[1]

This lycanthrope confessed his taste for eating the flesh of small children, “ amongst whom little girls were his special delight.” He died in November 1611.

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[1] Lancre, *L'Inconstance des mauvais anges*, iv. 4.

Another spell which inspired fear was the *conjunction*—that is to say, a prevention put upon the consummation of marriage. It was so frequent in the time of Del Rio that he related that, in certain districts, the people scarcely dared marry in the full light of day, for fear that the sorcerers should bewitch the married couple. The doctors themselves mentioned in their books the witches’ knot.

The means employed to obtain this particular inhibition varied infinitely. Each author tells us different recipes. The *Petit Albert*, a magic book which had many editions, advises that the organ of a newly killed wolf should be taken, and when one is near him whom one wishes to bind, he should be called by his name. As soon as he has answered, “ the aforesaid organ is to be tied with a lace of white thread and the bewitched will be as impotent in the marriage act as if he had been castrated.”

Certain other spells were capable of inspiring hatred or forgetfulness.

And, finally, sorcerers could draw down calamities—hail, rain, and thunder—by urinating into a hole hollowed out of the ground and by stirring the urine with a wand. They could make cattle die and crops wither. They caused fires.

Such were the chief witchcrafts. Doubtless, as we have said, the list is not complete. But at least this rapid review will have made it evident what fear and terror were sown by the Devil and the sorcerers and witches.

CHAPTER VII

THE SABBATH

Of all the manifestations of the Devil, the most solemn, the most lyrical, is the Sabbath.

What in reality is this Sabbath? It is the propitiatory ceremony, the adoration of the Devil. It is, superlatively, the sacrilegious festival.

The Sabbath, the festival of the Demon, could not, in all likelihood, be celebrated save at night. It is an ancient idea that evil actions are the children of darkness.[1] On the first day of creation had not Jehovah created the opposition of black and white by separating the darkness from the light? Black, in Christian symbolism, is the negation of all light; it is error and nothingness. White is the image of divinity. It signifies candour, innocence, humility, and chastity.[2] In all ages it has been the symbol of purity.

Everything which has any relation to the Demon is impure, black, or reddish (a modification of black, lit up by flames), because everything which belongs to God is white—universal truth and wisdom; God is light, and in Him there is no darkness.[1] The wisdom which emanates from Him is, says Solomon, the radiant whiteness of eternal light.

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[1] Ephes. vi. 12.

[2] Boguet, op. cit., chap. xix.

His raiment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like pure wool,[2] when He showed Himself to the prophet. And white and luminous, too, was the apparition of Christ at the hour of the transfiguration ; His face did shine as the sun, and His garments became white as the light.[3] He that overcometh shall thus be arrayed in white garments.[4] It is in the full light that man is best protected.

> Are there not twelve hours in the day, says Jesus, for the resurrection of Lazarus ? If a man walks during the day, he does not falter because he sees the light of the world. But if man walks during the night, he falters because the light is missing.[5]

Darkness inspires fear : fear of things which become invisible, fear of familiar objects which the shadows make mysterious, fear of the strange figures whose form the night changes, fear of the unknown. Darkness assists in hiding what may not be seen ; it is favourable to crimes and propitious to shameful deeds. The Devil chooses his hour, and acts when the darkest curtains of the night are drawn.[1] He does not manifest himself nor appear save by the light of fire and flames. He fears the day and the light of the sun.

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[1] 1 John 1–5.

[2] Dan. vii. 9 and x. 5.

[3] Matt. xvii. 2.

[4] Rev. iii. 5.

[5] Michaëlis, *Discours des esprits en tant qu'il est de besoin pour entendre et résoudre la matière difficile des sorciers* (Paris, 1613), schol. septième.

We know the symbolism of the days of the year well enough to guess that, after attributing to the Devil the empire of night, the theologians would have thought that certain nights would be more favourable than others for the consummation of sacrilege.

It seemed that Sunday, the day of holy congregation and of prayer, which recalls the creation of the world and the resurrection of the Saviour, must necessarily be respected by the Devil. And, similarly, Friday, the day of the Passion.

The Turks, says one author, celebrate Friday, the Jews Saturday, the Christians Sunday. Now he has set himself in front of them all, and has taken Thursday about midnight, in order to have the first celebration.[2]

Is this rule, then, immutable? Alas, we are forced to state that the sorcerers, when urged to reveal their misdeeds, sometimes conflicted a little with tradition in their haste to escape the pains of torture.

The Devil is inconstant, and has little respect for convention. He follows the rules of symbolism with but small devotion ; the author of disorder, he is disordered even in the celebration of his own festival. One after the other the demonologists were forced to make, regretfully, the sad admission. Lancre says : " We have found that they go there on almost every night, the which, I confess, is somewhat extraordinary."[1]

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[1] Pierre Ledancre, *Tableau de l'Inconstance des mauvais anges et demons* (Paris, 1613), Bk. II., disc. 1.

[2] Michaëlis, op. cit., schol. septième.

But, as well as these regular congregations, more important solemnities attracted larger numbers of the faithful. They were celebrated four times in the year—at Easter and at the great feasts of the Church. On those days, while the holy edifices were overflowing with the devout, the Devil, in supreme derision, gathered together the whole number of his allegiance, as if to count them and to balance them against those of God, his enemy and his master.

In the darkness of the Satanic night the festival was made ready. Sometimes the date was fixed in advance, the rendezvous given from one assembly to another ; sometimes the call broke forth suddenly, and frightened the witches themselves.

> The sorcerers are convoked by a trump blown by a Devil, the which resounds only in the ears and hearing of witches, in whatever place they may be.[2]

Absence is severely punished.

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[1] Lancre, op. cit., II., disc. i.

[2] Michaëlis, *Histoire admirable de la possession et confession d'une pénitente séduite par un magicien* (Paris 1613), Acte du 19 janvier.

Besides the chastisement administered to the defaulter he had to pay a fine.

The mysterious appeal resounded everywhere. It rang throughout space, freezing in an adorable anguish the heart of the most daring witch. It was transmitted with great speed, penetrating into the dwelling of the vampires and shaking them with ghostly thrills.

Sometimes an increasing tumult rushed through the sky ; it was the Queen of the Sabbath, surrounded by an immense crowd, who, traversing the clouds, gave notice of her passage and called the hesitating to her.

Swiftly the witch ran to her box of unguents. She had to anoint her body with them in order to fly to the sacrifice.

The question of the transport of the witches was a strange and troubling one. Some few of the accused alleged that they had gone there on foot, as one goes to church. Binsfeldius, Remy, and Del Rio give examples, but these were exceptions, to which little attention was paid.

Sorcery went on for a long time before this transport of witches was admitted. The *Canon Episcopi*, as we have seen, formally denies it.

It was argued from a common sense point of view that no one had ever seen, on stormy nights, the sky silhouetted with material witches, and that the Devil, an incorporeal spirit, had not power to move a corporeal thing, and that, finally, the transport of witches was against the laws of nature, which demand that heavy objects should be attached to the ground.

But it would be a grave under-estimation of the infinite resources of the theologians, in matters of dialectic, to believe that they could be stopped by such logical obstacles. Convinced of the reality of the phenomena, they gathered together all the confessions which they had extorted, and, going from the facts to their cause, they found in Scripture and in the mystic writings the best reasons for supporting their beliefs.

Spiritual transport was easy to prove. Ezekiel was seated with certain elders of Judah when the hand of the Lord seized him while none saw it, and transported him in spirit to the gates of Jerusalem.[1] All the divine visions of the prophets constituted so many certain proofs, from which it was concluded that witches could, by leaving their solid bodies in the place where they dwelt, voyage in spirit to the agreed meeting-place.

However, this purely spiritual explanation did not suffice.

For to seek to maintain that corporeal transport was impossible was, it seemed, to repudiate the most definite evidence—Habakkuk bearing through the air sustenance for Daniel, who was shut in beneath the triple seal of the lions' den[1]; Philip transported to Azotus by the Spirit of the Lord[2]—and, above all, to repudiate the truth of this overcoming of weight was to deny the most wonderful miracles of ecstasy—the levitation above the earth of St. Mary of Agrada, of Agnes of Bohemia, of St. Catherine Taxada, of St. Peter of Alcantara, of St. Francis of Assisi.

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[1] Ezek. viii. 1–4.

The whole lives of the saints are full of this frequent miracle: St. Philip Neri; Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits; Dominic, the founder of the Preaching Friars; the admirable Christine; Bernard; Albert; Catherine of Sienna—each and all had experienced beyond all doubt the marvellous intoxication of levitation.

With all the rigour of dry reasoning the theologians observed, with St. Thomas Aquinas, that, if a possibility exists in one thing, the same can exist in all others which are of like size and weight.[3]

If the angel of God can transport, it affords proof that the Demon, an angel also, though a fallen angel, can likewise do it. And does not the Gospel give the formal proof of this when it says that Jesus, having become a man, was taken into the wilderness to be tempted by the Devil, and that the Devil transported Him to the pinnacle of the temple, then took Him to the summit of a very high mountain?[1] And was not Simon the Magician, when he wanted to fly from the Capitol to the Aventine Hill before Peter, carried by the Devil, and he did not fall, breaking his legs, save when Lucifer let him go.

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[1] Dan. xiv. 35.

[2] Acts viii. 39–40.

[3] Wier, *histoires, disputes, et discours des illusions et impostures des diables* (Geneva, 1579), Bk. III., chap. xii.

Furthermore, this theory appeared to conform to the laws of science, for the body cannot, except in death, separate itself from the soul. How, then, could the momentary departure of the soul be supposed, since "when it was a matter of resuscitating a dead man the witches could do nothing at all about it."[2] How was it possible to admit that "when the witches are ravished into ecstasy, their soul is separated from their bodies by diabolic means, their bodies remaining insensible and stupid; for the soul never abandons its domicile save in death"?[3]

Thus the phenomenon demonstrated itself, and the belief in corporeal transport was established firmly:

> What is there lacking? Or what prevents it? Not a moving body: for the Devil takes on one. Not the resistance or weight of the body which is moved: because the strength of the Demon who moves it is much greater, for he can move even mountains out of their places. Nor yet even the swiftness and suddenness of the movement into distant places in a very short

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[1] Matt. iv. 1–10.

[2] Boguet, op, cit., xviii.

[3] Lancre, op. cit., II. 2.

space of time : for the power and agility of the angelic nature is capable of doing this according to St. Augustine and St. Thomas. And God does not prevent it : for we have an infinity of examples, and some of them even in the sacred pages of the Bible.[1]

Thus orthodox opinion recognised, in all, four different ways of going to the Sabbath : on foot, but this way was too simple to be serious ; in spirit, solely by imagination or fantasy ; corporeally, by cleaving through the air in rapid flight ; and finally, in order to meet all the difficulties, by a mysterious ravishment about which it was impossible to be certain, on waking up or on the return home, if it were a dream or a reality, as happened, we know, to St. Paul : " *sive in corpore nescio, sive extra corpus nescio, deus scit.*"[2]

The Devil had surrounded the transvection with complicated practices. The general opinion was that recourse must be had to an unguent with which " the thighs or other parts of the body were rubbed." And this unguent seems, again, to have been imagined in a symbolical way as a mockery of the sacraments. At least the greater number of authors give this reason.

It was believed to be composed of fatty materials. The oil poured by Jesus over the Good Samaritan, over the wounds of the stricken man of Jericho, is a sign of reconciliation, strength, and healing. It was the unctuous liquor of the olive, which is used for the sacrament of Extreme Unction. It is this which is used in abjurations against the person of Satan and his accomplices. But it is exorcised before it is blessed, as salt, and water, and the foundation-stone of churches, and the metal of bells, and the nuptial bed are exorcised, for they are, since the original sin, stained with an evil principle which has seized hold of matter. The oil is one of the elements of the chrism which consecrates the baptised, and priests, and kings : the witches' unguent is a derisive version of it :

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[1] Del Rio, op. cit., II., quest. 16.

[2] 2 Cor. xii. 2. Pico Della Mirandola, *La Strega* (Milan, 1864), pp. 61, 73; *Mall. Malef.*, Part I., q. i., q. ii., c. 3, 9 ; Bernard Comensis, *De Strigiis*, c. 3, 6.

> In order to imitate the holy and sacred sacraments of the Church and plausibly to acquire more respect and reverence for the abominable mysteries.[1]

In the same way that the oil, the pure extract of the olive, requires liturgical fabrication, in the same way that the twelve priests who assist the bishop must turn towards the high altar, which is itself placed towards the East, in the same way it was presumed that the fabrication of the unguent must obey an abominably sacrilegious ritual. The oil was therefore replaced by the fat of a murdered infant. It was a " superfluous wickedness," in order to make the crime done against morality and religion more atrocious.

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[1] Del Rio, op. cit., II., quest. 16.

When she was anointed, and ready to depart for the sacrilegious festival, the vampire tried to increase her crime by carrying off infants. Swiftly, as soon as the call had sounded, she ran to the house of a neighbour, lulled everyone asleep by enchantments, and stole the babies from the cradles. It little mattered to her whether they were baptised or not.

When all was ready for her departure, the witch bestrode a stick and took flight into space. This stick, too, had its significance. Arias Montanus observed that it might well be the counterfeit of the rod of Moses and of the flowering rod of Aaron. It was a very ancient tradition that the rod of wood had some mysterious power. " My people ask counsel at their stock, and their staff declareth unto them : for the spirit of whoredom hath caused them to err, and they have gone a whoring from under their God."[1]

It was, says Lancre, a supporting point in order to avoid vertigo. The Devil " leads them to do this because, being women feeble in courage, they would not have the bravery to take flight and to soar, as is sometimes necessary in order to be transported both very high and for a very long way."

In any case, the broomstick was only a second best for those who were "too soft and effeminate to suffer the rude touch of Satan," for most often he himself appeared to conduct them. Then he would come in the form of a great black sheep,[1] of a goat,[2] of a bull, or a flying horse, or a dog, or even a great black man, or like a sort of man forged out of air.[3]

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[1] Hosea iv. 12.

Setting foot on the pot-hanger, they took their impetus and suddenly flew up through the chimney and hurled themselves forth into the sky.

It was a pleasant and wondrous journey. The fresh air, striking against their faces, brought them a delicious drunkenness, and the sky, upon the Sabbath nights, was everywhere furrowed by the swiftly voyaging witches. They rushed and flew, dishevelled like furies, "their heads being so light that they cannot suffer any covering." Some alone, and others in groups, they formed an endless procession.

> The sorcerers are borne through the air in front of the prince of the sorcerers, who is sustained in the air by Devils in the middle of the way, and when they pass him they do him honour and reverence, then they go to the Synagogue.[4]

The places chosen for the Sabbath were various. In general it was thought that the Devil chose a desolate piece of ground at some crossroads, a memory of the *ludi compitales*, ancient popular assemblies. It was there that in pagan times were the altars upon which the newly-wed bride laid a small coin ; it was there that the peasant came, at the end of the year, to hang up the broken yokes.

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[1] Boguet, op. cit., xv.

[2] Lancre, op. cit., II., disc. 3.

[3] Del Rio, op. cit., II., quest. 16.

[4] Michaëlis, op. cit., *Interrogatoire de Magdeleine La Palud.*

The crossroads are the meeting-places of vagabonds and wanderers, suspicious people ; they are the ends and the dividing-places of roads. The wilderness is the desolate place haunted by evil spirits ; it was in the wilderness that the angel Raphael chained up the Demon who had slain the husbands of Sara.[1] It was there that Jesus underwent His temptation.[2]

However, the Sabbath can take place elsewhere : at the top of some mountain, at the bottom of a narrow gorge, or at the edge of a precipice. And it was known, too, that the ruins of old buildings and castles, remote places " where for all houses there are only the houses of the dead which are cemeteries," were propitious for the reunion, and their neighbourhood was avoided as soon as the light of day had vanished. Assemblies were seen so large that twelve thousand participants might have taken part in them.

The ceremony was not organised haphazard. Each person took his place with astonishing discipline, and according to a precise rule. The Demon raised some of his servants to the rank of ministers of the cult, distributing to them diverse powers, which, according to their perversity, were those of the Church inverted. Certain wizards and witches were invested with important dignities, and, as a supreme reward, the priests of God who had become traitors and deserters carried out the highest functions.

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[1] Tobit viii. 3.

[2] Matt. loc. cit.

And some held honorary and lay functions. There was a " master dispenser " in charge of the finances, a great cup-bearer to serve drink,[1] a master of the ceremonies, who kept order as the Swiss does in the offices of the Church.

The faithful were ranged according to their rank.

When the whole crowd had assembled, a tense moment of concentration preceded the apparition of the Master. Until then it had been only the preparation for the sacrifice. Satan had not yet, in his proper presence, consecrated the awful ceremony. The time of waiting was short. The thoughts of all turned at one instant towards the Spirit of Evil, a cold wind bowed down their heads, and their anguish was great, because a horrible terror of the unknown mingled with the impure and ferocious joy of sacrilege. The whole perverse, but baptised, gathering waited with hope mingled with fear.

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[1] Lancre, op. cit., II. 4.

The Devil did not always come in person. Sometimes he delegated his functions to Master Leonard, a huge, half-frantic negro, and sometimes to a little Devil, reserving his own appearance more usefully for the assemblies on the four great annual festivals.

On those days, when he delayed his coming, some noted witch would leave the crowd and crouch down in the middle of a circle near an earthen pot. She would utter incantations, howl out vile words, twist about on the ground, offering her belly as a sacrifice, adjuring Beelzebub to appear and to seize her. A vapour would arise from the narrow gullet of the vessel, a condensation took place, the smoke thickened, took on the form of a goat, and this goat became " so large that it was frightful."

With one bound he sprang into a golden throne which came up from the earth, and the Master, present at last, dominating the assembly, counted the number of his subjects.

For the first ritual gesture of the faithful was of homage and humility. The Devil had appeared seated first of all, because the Lord was seated even when He taught His people in the Temple —*Quotidie apud vos sedebam docens in Templo et non me tenuistis*—but as soon as he had manifested himself he rose to receive the pledge of adoration from his followers. In the same way that the faithful of the earlier Church gave one another the kiss of peace, a kiss whose tradition has been preserved, and which is still given by priests to their prelates, so, in the same way, the Devil required an embrace, but a degrading one this, and "in such filthy parts that it is altogether shameful merely to recount it."

One after the other the witches, filled with emotion, approached and knelt down, "and kissed him on the shameful hinder parts,"[1] and this kiss left a delicious feeling.

They bore in their hands a candle of black pitch, and they lit it from that which Satan bore between his horns. A blue flame sprang from it.

On their shoulders they carried a toad, the incarnation of a little familiar Devil, and before them they drove the infants they had stolen.

Profiting by their appearance before the Master, the witches then proceeded to a general and public confession. Each one told proudly of the most horrible crimes she had been able to commit since the previous reunion. It was a superb rivalry, a bidding against one another to find who had done the most evil.

They render account to Satan of all they have done since the last assembly, those being the best received who have made the largest number of people and beasts die, who have dealt out the greatest number of diseases,

[1] Del Rio, op. cit., II., quest. 16.

who have blighted the largest quantity of fruit; in short, those who had committed the greatest amount of wickedness and abomination.[1]

The crowd applauded the greatest crimes, howled with joy at the most luxurious ignominies, and those who avowed that they had borne themselves humanely "are mocked and derided by all."

The Devil encouraged them to harm their neighbours, to make them fall ill, to make the cattle rot, to be avenged upon their enemies, using this formula: "Be avenged or you will die"; and in a solemn oath they promised to ruin the harvest, to make hail fall, to propagate epidemics.

Satan blessed the assembly by raising his left hand to his forehead, his fingers in the air; then, having lowered his arm to his waist, he lifted it again swiftly and, with a half turn of his hand, cast over the assembly his benediction.

Suddenly an altar rose up from the ground, ordered as are those of the Church on days of the great ceremonies.

An officiating wizard stepped forward to carry out the divine sacrifice, and the audience, standing up and panting, crossed themselves with their left hands and gazed in terror at this sacrilegious operation.

The altar was lit by stinking candles of pitch or resin, instead of the virgin wax which is the symbol of purity and the evangelic light. It was surmounted by a frightful Christ, disfigured and shameful, the arms partially extended over a dismembered cross, because Satan and his followers could not look upon the cross if it were intact.

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[1] Boguet, op. cit., disc. 22.

The Mass, properly speaking, is a sacred drama. It is the holiest liturgy around which the highest religious symbols are grouped. It is, in truth, all symbol. The sacrifice of the altar reproduces, in the whole proceedings of the priest and in his least movements, the different events of the Passion. It is the pious representation and the magic evocation of everything which is the very foundation of venerated belief.

The imagination of the inquisitors had plenty of scope. It could give itself free rein and suppose the most horrible deformations. It was easy to transport to the demoniac territory what was already only a symbolic image in the religious domain.

The priest put on his sacerdotal ornaments, back to front, and covered himself with a black cloak without a cross. The Devil urinated into a hole to prepare a liquid for the aspersion, and, followed by a sub-deacon, the officiating wizard climbed the steps of the altar to counterfeit the High Mass.

Sometimes the naked body of a woman served as the holy table ; more often the sacrifice took place without her. With a book in his left hand, the priest gabbled prayers. He omitted the *Confiteor* which precedes repentance, and the *Hallelujah*, the expression of praise joined to adoration and to thanksgiving.

Everything was done as in the ritual, but inversely, and the Creed became a terrible profession of Satanic faith.

The Devil seated himself when the offering took place.

> Sometimes a man holds the basin, into which they of the Sabbath throw sometimes two crowns, sometimes one crown of good silver (for it is not the Devil who gives it), some more and some less at their discretion, and according to their means, for I cannot find any rule.

And the Devil drew apart or turned away his head when some piece marked with the cross fell into the basin. The money thus gathered in was to serve to ensure the defence of the sorcerers brought to trial before the tribunals.

The elevation of the Host was the moment of supremest profanation. The Host was sometimes a round of black turnip, sometimes black unleavened bread " without anything engraved upon it," and sometimes black triangular bread.

Cursing aloud, the shameful priest clasped to himself the consecrated substance. In a sort of horrible frenzy he bore himself, " his face not turned to the altar but quite the other way about, his face turned towards the people and capering about without any reverence." He raised his feet in the air, " and contrarily, his head bent down below in front of the Devil, he remained in this posture during the elevation for as long as it would take to say a *Credo*."

The Host thus remained presented to the impure eyes, which were fixed upon it for a long time, the while the crowd repeated ceaselessly : " Black Crow, Black Crow," " being unable to say any other prayer nor being able to pronounce any other words " ; then in a sudden frenzy, the Host was, " as a sign of the greatest execration, suddenly thrown down and trampled under foot."

The sacrilegious madness passed all limits. God was thrown to be eaten by the beasts, and the witches pushed their demoniac rage so far that the beasts themselves sometimes refused to take part in their orgies.

No bell accompanied this part of the ceremony, which was performed amid cries and curses only. This is because the bell has the mystic virtue of driving off the evil spirits which raise up tempests, hail, and thunder, and the propagation of its sonorous waves makes calamity flee away.[1]

The audience gathered together and communicated in the two elements ; they drank from the chalice a wine " whose odour and taste are insupportable, and which puts the body into a sweat while an icy cold penetrates even to the marrow of their bones."

The profanation was complete. Some spat upon the Host and rubbed their bodies with it, defiling it with the most shameful contacts.

And the service continued, while the fevered audience could contain itself no longer, belching blasphemies and slavering infamies, the priest replacing the *Ite Missa est* by " Go to the Devil," which was the prologue to a yet more filthy orgy.

Everything which, spiritually, could be profaned, had been—savagely. God had been outraged in His own mysteries. The abomination was consummated. The witch, who had returned to her vomit, had not been stricken down by outraged divinity. It was the proof of the sovereign power of Lucifer, and God was vanquished and reduced to impotence. It now remained to exhaust material satisfactions ; none must be forgotten. The Devil, on the Sabbath, should he not use, the better to attract and trick men, every sort of gross pleasure, " presenting to us this double needle of the flesh and ruining us through feasting and through women, by the flesh of corpses and of corrupted women " ?[1]

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[1] This popular belief had, however, been combated in the councils which sought to attribute victories over calamities to prayer alone, to which the bells invite the faithful. Cf. Concil. Mediol., 1576, contit. 1 part, *De oratione* ; Concil. Coloniens., 1536, *De constitut. ecclesiae*, art. 4. See also Del Rio, op. cit., VI., sect. 3.

With a noise of thunder, the altar suddenly disappeared, while thanksgiving was offered up to Beelzebub ; and from the ground there rose up a vast table covered with a cloth woven of golden thread. The banquet was about to begin.

In the place of honour, and seated on a golden throne, was the Devil, and he placed by his side a witch notorious for her vices or her beauty. An ephemeral favourite, she was for that evening the Queen of the Sabbath.

All the participants took their places.

On the table there were no knives, " for fear lest they should be crossed and to show that the prepuce of their evil habits must not be cut off, and perhaps, too, in order to avoid murderous quarrelling on this Sabbath of hatred."

Sometimes the witches had brought with them their food, and sometimes the Devil supplied the meats. There was no agreement as to the quality of the dishes. Some maintained that only exquisite things were served, others that they were all execrable :

Toads, the flesh of hanged men, corpses, which were unburied and stolen from the cemeteries being but newly buried, the flesh of unbaptised children or of beasts who had died by themselves unslaughtered.

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[1] Lancre, op. cit., III. disc. 8.

And it seemed that human flesh must have been a dish of peculiar quality because anthropophagy was forbidden by the commandments of God, and, on the other hand :

> to invalidate the doctrine of the Resurrection, for, as Pliny, a true atheist, argues, how can bodies be resurrected, even by divine power, in their own substance, when the flesh has been eaten by others and wholly changed into the proper substance of those who have eaten it ?[1]

Malmsey was drunk, "to heat the flesh to concupiscence," after the example of the great harlot who made drunken those that dwell in the earth with the wine of her fornication.[2] The bread appeared as an evil black pie made with black millet, and salt was never served. All was poison, death, and corruption. Salt is the symbol of wisdom and prudence ; it is one of the offerings prescribed in Leviticus.[3]

But the diners were deceived in their meats, and remained famished. Everything was spurious, because not made with the true substance ; the viands were there only in appearance, having certain qualities of bread, wine, or flesh, but these qualities could not endure for long, for, says St. Thomas, "the works of the Devil are not, nor can be for long, permanent, because they do not have the true substance."[1]

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[1] Michaëlis. *Discours des esprits*, schol. ix.

[2] Rev. xvii. 2.

[3] Lev. ii. 13.

After the last mouthful, the table disappeared, the space remained empty, a strange and discordant music assailed the ears, and the Demon, seizing hold of his she-Devil, opened the ball, drawing all the others after in a wild dance.

The orchestra was composed of varied instruments. While a little Devil drew forth sharp sounds from a flute, another produced a warmer melody from an oboe, and a tambourine beat out the measure falsely. Sometimes a huge drum dominated the concert, and accompanied it with low sounds like the rolling of thunder.

And they danced without any restraint. There were none but lubricous and shameless dances. A strange spectacle for the imagination, this furious abandonment ! Everything was marvellously topsy-turvy.

The hunchbacks were more adept in it than others.

> The halt, and the old, and the decrepit, and the limbless, are those who dance most lightly, for these are feasts of disorder, where everything appears disordered and against nature.[2]

The men became insensate and the women

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[1] Michaëlis, loc. cit.

[2] Boguet, loc. cit.

miscarried, so great was the violence of their movements. They could be seen brandishing the broomsticks which had served them as their mounts, and, as a sign of their joy, they howled into the wind : " *Har-Har, Devil, Devil, jump here, jump there, play here, play there*," while the multitude unwearyingly repeated the echo, " Sabbath ! Sabbath ! "

They took up immodest poses, their bellies provocative, their bodies leaning backward.

And yet all this shameful ball was merely the preliminary to scenes of orgy yet more ignoble, for this violent and passionate dance was only carried out in order to excite to what " the lubricous man desires of woman."

> For the man and the woman, passing and repassing several times at a few paces, measure themselves one against the other ; one might say that each member and small part of the body sought and took its measure to join and associate itself to the other in its time and place.[1]

All these sorcerers, until now deceived and famished, and none of whose passions had been assuaged, seemed to have been held in suspense only to make their appetites increase yet further. Their whole flesh, their whole soul, their whole life, was now animated with naught save a tremendous thrill of concupiscence, and the Devil shouldering aside the participants, suddenly seized hold of a woman, threw her to the ground, held her quivering beneath him, and slaked in a horrible spasm the terrific desire palpitating in his limbs.

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[1] Lancre, loc. cit.

Copulation with the Demon was universally accepted, and did not seem arguable. It was said in Deuteronomy that all those who had coupled with Belphegor had perished, and it was forbidden in Leviticus to couple with goats.

Such was the common opinion of the Fathers, the theologians, and the philosophers. St. Augustine, in his *City of God*,[1] and St. Thomas, had proclaimed that it was impudence to seek to deny it. And was it not a matter of antithesis to the mystical unions with God—marriages with the universal principle of life whose fruit was manifested in the form of spiritual fecundity and the virtues ?[2]

The Devil, however, preferred married women, not being accustomed to having acquaintance with virgins, because he could not adulterate with them. He got no pleasure from it, because, being pure spirit, he could take no joy in things of the senses ; " he does it simply in order to make man fall into the precipice in which he is, which is disgrace from God most high and most puissant."

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[1] XV., chap. xxxiv : " *Confirmant Silvanos et Faunos quos vulgo incubos vocant, improbos sæpe exstitisse mulieribus et carum appetisse ac perigisse concubitum.*

[2] Madeleine Buttler, of the convent of Buken, had seven children of her union with the Lord : abstinence, poverty, obedience, etc.

But his contact, his embrace, and his defilement caused an atrocious, delicious joy. Sometimes, in order to add an element of mystery to his love-making, he surrounded himself with a thick vapour, which hid from all eyes both himself and his conquest. His caress caused a painful burning, and his brutality was redoubtable. The women uttered howls as if in the pains of childbirth.

> They could be heard crying out like persons who suffer a great pain, and they are seen to return from the Sabbath all bleeding. I believe it is as much in front as behind, according to the place where he came in contact with them.[1]

And there were, besides, precise details and circumstantial and well-established descriptions as to his conformation, products of the disordered fantasy of the witches. Jeannette d'Abadie, of the land of Labour, who was only thirteen years old, said that :

> They suffered an extreme anguish, the which comes from the fact that, the member of the Demon being made of scales like a fish, they close together when they enter and lift up and prick when they go out.[2]

And the same Jeannette added further :

> If it were extended, it would be about an ell in

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[1] Lancre, loc. cit.

[2] Lancre, loc. cit.

length, but he keeps it coiled in the shape of a serpent.

Marie d'Aspicuette, a girl of nineteen, who was condemned at the same trial, declared, in addition, "that it is of the medium size, red, dullish, twisted, very rough, and as if pricking." Marie de Marigrane, a girl of Biarritz, aged fifteen, had seen it "half of iron and half of flesh in all its length, and the genitals were the same." Marguerite, a girl of Sare, sixteen years old, asserted that it was like a mule's, and Pierre de Linarre, who was burnt at the same time, that it was like a horn. Françoise Fontaine, a possessed girl of Louviers, said it was hard as a black flint and very cold.[1]

It was the last part of the Sabbath. The orgy had reached its culmination. Athirst with concupiscence, the witches had their nerves stretched to the utmost. Fearful of seeing the festival end before they had been able to exhaust every kind of ignominious stupration, they held forth their bellies convulsively, offering themselves to renewed embraces. The Devil performed prodigies, unwearyingly distributing the most agonising delights.

The fever became more intense as the hour grew late. A wind of terror froze the naked bodies.

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[1] *Procès-verbal fait pour délivrer une fille posédée par le malin esprit à Louviers* (1591). Interrogatory of 31st August, 1591. Manuscrit Bib. Nat. fonds français No. 42, 122, edit. Paris, *Progrès médical*, 1883.

Each began to fear the light of day which soon would illuminate the common shame, and the advance-guard cry of the cock, sounding strident through the dying night, sent consternation with it.

The cock is fierce courage and vigilance, he is the sentinel who watches over the church, higher than the cross, the symbol of zealous supervision, of pastoral preaching, of morning rousing forth from sleep, which is the image of death. It is he who sounded Peter's retreat, giving him the signal to return to his Creator. His clear and sonorous crow convulsed with terror, because it was the sharp recall after the insensate dream. The trembling witches rushed hither and thither, demented.

Satan suddenly disappeared into a cloud ; he surrounded himself with flames, and was consumed in the fire.

There remained nothing of him save a little heap of cinders, which was swiftly divided up. The rout was complete. The whole assembly vanished, and left the place clean, but as if burnt by fire in the first rays of the sun.

The witches found themselves transported back to their homes. They were weary, broken with fatigue, but still disappointed, still unassuaged, and already thrilling at the idea of the next Sabbath.

CHAPTER VIII

THE WITCHES' TRIAL

Black magic, one may say truly, was an epidemic. It began with the prosecutions, and disappeared with them. We are far from the times when a certain Trois Eschelles :

> perceiving himself to be accused of certain acts beyond the capacity of human powers, and being unable to give any plausible reason for what he was doing, confessed that it was all done with the aid of Satan.[1]

He denounced twelve hundred people as having commerce with the Devil, and declared to Charles IX in 1572 that there were one hundred thousand sorcerers in the kingdom.

This coincidence of epidemic witchcraft with the prosecutions has inspired a recent author to say : " The Sabbath is the work of the erudition of the inquisitors and jurists who interrogated, and of the suggestible ignorance of the sorcerers who were interrogated."

It was the Church which took the first initiative in the prosecutions. We have shown, in a preceding chapter, how the doctrine of heretical magic grew up little by little ; here we propose merely to describe the trial of the sorcerer at a period when this procedure had taken on its definitive form ; that is to say, at the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries.

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[1] Bodin, op. cit., Bk. IV., chap. i., p. 186. Cf. Mezeray.

In France, two jurisdictions took cognisance of trials for witchcraft.

The Holy Office, on the one hand, which discovers and denounces heresy, decrees seizure of the person, condemns to fasting if the crime is secret, to privation of the sacraments and excommunication if the crime is notorious, but cannot impose any afflictive punishment, *quia Ecclesia abhorret a sanguine* ; on the other the secular jurisdiction, to whose arm the Holy Office appeals by requisitory letters, for the pronunciation of capital punishment, with confiscation of goods. The Holy Office could not set free a prisoner without reporting the sentence to the royal procurator and awaiting his reply.

Here is the procedure in the matter :

> When there is a common misdemeanour and a privileged case which are complicated together, the royal judge must go to the Court of the Holy Office. Each has his clerk there, who writes down the proceedings simultaneously and independently. The judge of

> the Church presides, and has precedence during the examination. It is he who asks the questions and undertakes the interrogation of the accused as to the facts, and the verification of witnesses and the confrontation of witnesses with the accused, all in the presence of the royal judge, who has his own clerk write down all that is said and done by the witnesses and the accused ; and the whole is set down separately by the clerk of the Holy Office, who writes it down too. When the promoter has given his conclusions, and the Holy Office, which has taken priests or graduates as assessors, has given its definitive sentence, the order is to transfer and conduct the prisoner to the royal prisons, there to be tried and judged by the royal judge in respect of the privileged case. It often happens that the judge of the Church has ordered merely fasts and prayers, when the royal judge abrogates that by a condemnation to death. In that case the accused is exempt from fasting.

That was the principle ; we must add that this procedure was not always scrupulously observed. Often the royal judge alone took cognisance of the matter. The secular authority steadily encroached upon the power of the Holy Office, which generally did not have to intervene.

The search for heresy was the foundation and justification of the ecclesiastical trial, but it must not be thought that all sorcery was heretical. The distinction was very important, for the consequences were totally different.

Sorcery without heresy did not bring upon

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[1] Bruneau, *Observations et maximes sur les lois criminelles* (Paris, 1715).

itself the penalty of death, but only scourging, the galleys, or exile.

But if, on the contrary, the sorcery smelt of heresy, the penalty was that for heretics—that is to say, death.

In order to make clear the distinction of the one from the other, the books of the theologians are full of subtleties. Farinacius seems to have established the elements which constituted the crime well enough when he judged that sorcery heretical in which the Demon is invoked in order to do or declare what he cannot do or know.[1]

The forms which are most frequently met with in the trials are the covenant with Lucifer, carnal coupling with the Devil (*incubi* and *succubi*), provocation of hail and storms, and bodily transvection.

Sorcery which did not imply heresy was frequently met with. It was above all a crime of priests, and consisted particularly in using the power of God for evil purposes.

Such, for example, were the doings of those priests who extinguished the lights and despoiled the altars " with the intention of harming those for whom they used them in the offices of burial " ; and those who celebrated Masses for the dead in favour of the living, in order that " those for whom they celebrated them should dissolve more quickly into the coffers of death." And likewise not heretical were those who celebrated the Holy Rite over profane things, " such as a host which has not been consecrated, full of certain notes and letters in blood drawn from the ring-finger, the bonnet of a newly-born child, or unbaked bread, or a raw paste made into the likeness of a cake, the stone vulgarly called calamite . . . etc." ; those also who during Mass say prayers tending rather to sin than to divine worship or the salvation of souls, those who consult diviners and snake-charmers, if in all their incantations they entreat the aid of God alone " simply and devoutly, without any superstition."

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[1] Farinacius, *Prax. et Theoricas crim.*, L. I. tit. iii., quæst. xx. 79 : " *Sortilegia dicuntur hæreticalia, quando in illis imploratur auxilium dæmonis ad cognoscendum et faciendum ea, quæ de sui natura scire aut facere ipse dæmon non potest.*"

As for the astrologers, cheiromancers, and other diviners, they are not heretical except in so far as they proclaim their predictions to be " infallible and necessary, and not possible, according to to the inclination and presumption they have of them."

Thus we see that the invocation and intervention of the Devil were considered the criteria of heresy in the matter of magic. The accused had to be proved guilty of this.

All the crimes committed by sorcerers in the name of the Devil or by his intermediary spread a special horror, and the theologians and jurists were agreed that in cases of witchcraft it was not necessary to respect all the rules of the law.[1]

"It is an extraordinary crime," Martin Del Rio, a former Procureur-Général of Brabant and doctor of the Society of Jesus, explains. "It is extraordinary because of the circumstances which accompany it, and thereby prevent it from being comprehended within the general disposition of the law, any more than the crime of lèse-majesty."[2]

It can readily be imagined that this precaution was a useful one, when it is remembered that many of the facts of which the sorcerers were accused were impossible to verify by any tangible proof, and that to secure a condemnation it was necessary to accept the reality of pure fantasy, and to treat as grave infractions the maddest thoughts of credulous imaginations.

This crime, says Farinacius,[3] is of evil example, and creeps like cancer. It is most often committed at night, when men are least able to be on guard against it ; it is done secretly and treacherously against neighbours, masters, brothers, fathers, children, wives, associates, companions, friends, and familiars ; furthermore, this vice is a habit perpetrated in accustomed repetition, always busied upon some evil, carried out with firm deliberation and manifest fraud, or, as they said at that time, *guet-a-pens*, the which denotes an open obstinacy in wickedness.

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[1] "*In causa hæresis sufficiunt minores probationes quam in aliis criminibus*" (Julius Clarus, L. V. Hæresis).

[2] Del Rio, op. cit., Bk. V., p. 717.

[3] Loc. cit.

Such were the principal reasons and arguments which tended to make legal rules and proofs for witchcraft singularly undefined and arbitrary.

As soon as a case of witchcraft came to the cognisance of justice, an inquisition was begun. It could be either general or particular. If it were general, it corresponded roughly to what is to-day an inquiry into a crime by persons unknown ; it sought to find those malefactors who had not been revealed either by denunciation or by actual discovery. If it were particular, it had as its object a specified individual.

For the general inquisition, the necessary indications were, naturally, far less grave than for the particular.

The *particular* inquisition, to be found good and valid, had to find and relate to one another a certain number of conditions the choice of which seems to have been dictated by prudence.[1]

It was required that the crime should be patent, this being understood of crimes externally committed, such as the rotting of crops and the murder of children. For crimes of the intellect, amongst which were the covenant, and carnal coupling

[1] Farinacius, op. cit., L.I., tit. i., quest. i. 6, *et seq.*

with the Demon—crimes difficult to inquire into—the judge, in order to be able to proceed, had to have cognisance of some report, common rumour, or specially grave indication.

The first act in the procedure was an inquiry—a preparatory process for the purpose of establishing the charges and gathering the evidence. The witnesses were heard secretly. Everything was set in motion to assemble the evidence which, transmitted in closed and sealed notebooks, was to be deposited with the registry of the jurisdiction charged with decreeing punishment. The judge had permission to issue a monitory which, published in the churches, made it obligatory upon all those who might have knowledge of the details of the crime to come, under pain of ecclesiastical penalties, to reveal them.

The totality of the depositions and informations which had been secured formed the first inquisition, and a distinction was made between complete proofs, semi-proofs, and presumptive proofs.

For an accusatory decree to be issued and a provisional arrest made, presumptive proof was sufficient, and semi-proofs were enough to notify the criminal, adjourn the proceedings, and put him to the torture.

The principal semi-proofs or leading evidence in matters of magic were, firstly, the evidence of witnesses. Disregarding the ordinary rule, a single legitimate and irreproachable witness was usually considered sufficient to justify torture. Another very strong sort of evidence was denunciation by accomplices. An absolute principle was always to interrogate the criminal upon this point, and very rigorously was this principle applied to the sorcerers. And, more, Binsfeldius maintained that, in order to compel denunciations, the confessors ought to abstain from giving absolution to anyone who should refuse to speak.

The denouncer was interrogated rigorously about every circumstance : Who ? What ? When ? Where ? With whom ? It was necessary that the denunciation should not vary, and that he who made it should persevere in it.

Very important semi-proof was deduced from unsavoury rumours. They meant bad reputation, and application was made of the prevailing idea that there is no smoke without fire. However, it was necessary that the rumour should have originated amongst men ; it had no value if it came from women, save if it were of a particularly feminine nature, and referred, for example, to abortion. The rumour had to be " strong and consistent," and it must have been spread at the time of the witchcraft, or shortly after, and in any case before the beginning of the inquiry.

And another grave indication, which constituted a semi-proof, was the flight of the accused.

Finally, threats were treated as most important presumptive evidence. The jurists had taken pains to avoid a confusion of serious and unambiguous threats with mere boasting ; but if the least harm had followed the threat, there was justification for considering it as a precious piece of evidence.

Such were the chief semi-proofs ; it will readily be imagined how arbitrary was their interpretation. The enumeration of the presumptive proofs and far-fetched evidence is far more terrifying to a mind accustomed to requiring serious facts as presumptions on which justice may decide to act.

These presumptive proofs were innumerable. They were constituted, it may be said, by everything that could possibly give birth to the slightest suspicion.

First of all came the fact of not preventing a witchcraft, to which one might have set some obstacle. " When another presumptive proof is also met with," says Del Rio, " the accused can be credited with the evil, and afterwards, if there are sufficient proofs, his trial can be carried out and completed." And again there was the voluntary favouring of witches, or the attempt to diminish the importance of their crimes, or to uphold that credence should not be given to the true accounts of them that existed, or to affirm that these are vain things, full of fantasy.

Further presumptive proofs were : the fact of having helped sorcerers by word or advice ; of having hid them ; of having lied when, as a witness, one had been interrogated as to the nature and principal circumstances of the crime which had been committed ; of varying in one's testimony ; of vacillating or stammering in one's answers : "when a person speaks fearfully, trembling all over, pale and bathed in sweat, because the face and the eye are the mirror of the soul" ; having frequent conversations with evil persons suspected of magic ; or coming to complain too quickly, and as if to put oneself under cover, when a black magic had been committed.

And it must be added, further, that very slight evidence rendered suspect anyone in whose house someone had died through witchcraft, or near whose house a corpse had been found, and anyone who was found at the time of the crime in the place where the witchcraft took place, and even anyone who commonly frequented the street where the witchcraft took place.

He who had a bad appearance was suspect, likewise a man with a bad surname, or one who kept his eyes obstinately lowered, or who was born in an ill-reputed country full of witches, or who was accustomed to swear, or blaspheme, or name the name of the Devil continually, or who neither cried nor wept when he was tortured ; and also vagabonds ; and also he who by an ostentation of religion remained longer than the rest at church ; and, finally, he who had marks upon his body.

Such were some of the semi-proofs and presumptive proofs which were used in the first inquiry in the utmost secrecy, without any guarantee of either justice or common sense.

As soon as the preparatory procedure was concluded, the notes of it were sent to the royal commissaries, who within three days considered the legal proofs and came to a conclusion about them ; then the judge drew up his decree, which constituted already, at this stage, a positive judgment which decided the course of the proceedings. The accused was assigned a time to be heard in evidence, an adjournment was made for him to appear in person, and his body was ordered to be seized.

The arrest of a magician had been worked out in advance in its smallest details. Yet many judges feared to proceed to it. The power of the magician was so wide, and the occult forces of which he was the master so powerful, that the hesitation which the magistrate felt can be understood. Fortunately, the theologians intervened to restore peace of mind to them and to explain that, when they were charged with the administration of justice, a quasi-divine mission, they were protected by their very functions.[1] "It is agreed that the sorcerers cannot harm the persons of the officers and ministers of justice, however wicked they be."[2]

Sorcerers could be seized in all places, even in churches and holy places, because they were sacrilegious blasphemers, murderers, and poisoners.

Certain magistrates had thought that perhaps their power, like that of Antæus, came from the earth, whose centre is the region of infernal flames; therefore the sorcerer was suddenly lifted up, to separate him from the source of his power. He was placed in a basket which, suspended from a stick, was carried on the shoulders of two men.

"This fashion of behaving pleases me not at all," says Del Rio, "and I hold it as superstitious." However, it was frequently adopted.[3]

Others had them completely stripped of all their clothes, and clad only in a shirt, "which had been spun, woven, and sewn in a single day."

Care was taken that the sorcerer should not touch the judge's hand, nor see the judge before the judge saw him, "for fear lest he should corrupt the judge in this fashion," and Del Rio insisted that vigilance must not be relaxed in any particular, for those who do witchcraft still have power to harm when they are in the hands of justice, for it is certain that even in prison they have copulation with the Demon.

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[1] See especially Le Loyer, *Histoires des spectres* (1605), Liv. VIII.

[2] Boguet, op. cit., chap. xlii.

[3] Boguet, *Instruction pour un juge en faict de Sorcellerie*, art. x. and xi.

A thorough-going search took place at the same time as the arrest.

> Every spot in the house must be diligently examined, in case there may be found a toad, the same being clothed in his livery, or bones of children, or greases and stinking powders and other like things, with which the witches ordinarily provide themselves.[1]

Then straight away came the interrogatory, a horrible drama, both subtle and treacherous. The judge, in order to obtain a conviction, had the right to lie and to deceive.

The accused was forced to take the oath. If he did not tell the truth he aggravated his crime, and consequently his punishment, by his perjury. The liberty to lie, which the judges allowed to themselves, was not allowed to the accused.

The wretched culprit was thus first delivered over to the worst moral anguish. Ceaselessly harassed by treacherous questions, he could only with the utmost difficulty resist the terrible interrogatory, which was pursued without respite by alternations of apparent pity and savage grimness.

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[1] Bodin, op. cit., IV.

> I have seen [says Bodin] a judge, whose face seemed so frightful and his voice so terrible that, threatening to have them hanged if they did not tell the truth, by this means the accused suddenly confessed as if they had lost all courage. This expedient is good with those persons who are timid, and not impudent.

One might almost say that the interrogatory ceased only when the magistrate became exhausted.

Simultaneously, the sorcerer was submitted to examination by the medical experts. His body was completely shaved to discover the Demon's mark. The surgeons took needles and drove them into all the suspected parts. The howls of the accused did not stop the savagery of the operation ; quite the contrary, since the object was to find the point where the needle could go in without causing pain.

It is true to say that the practices employed to discover these marks were of barbarous ferocity. It seems to us that no account could display their horror more convincingly than the simple report of the trial of three sorcerers of Berri in January 1614.

> After this interrogatory, having proceeded to the shaving of her hair, the barber recognised and declared

that he had recognised a mark on the head, on the occipital bone, of the size of the palm of the hand. In which having pricked, according to the rules, three pins in three different places, of such stiffness that they were bent and remained until after the shaving, with out that they were felt or perceived. And being questioned whether she had had any pains in her head, she replied that she had had some galls there. Upon this, the barber being questioned to say what he thought of it, and his oath being taken, he swore and affirmed that the aforesaid mark was extraordinary and supernatural, and that he did not judge that the aforesaid mark proceeded from the galls.[1]

It is not easy to believe that throughout these first tortures certain of the accused still refused to speak, and obstinately remained absolutely dumb. One's mind refuses to believe it ; yet it was a frequent fact.

Many witches endure the tortures with great obstinacy, being provided, as is said, with the remedy or charm of *taciturnity* ; the which charm is held to be composed of the heart or other parts of an unbaptised child, bruised cruelly and violently and then reduced to a powder, the which dusted over the body secretly, they draw from it the virtue and power of their silence.[2]

This charm of taciturnity seems to have been widespread.

It has been remarked that they always look down at the ground, and that they stammer I know not what when the judge speaks to them ; the which makes us believe that meantime they are communicating with the Devil to get advice from him as to the answers which they ought to make.[1]

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[1] Interrogatoire d'Antoinette Brenithon. Filleau, *Receuil général des edits, arrêts, et Réglements notables* (1630), quest. 98.

[2] Del Rio, op. cit., V. ix.

In order to force a confession, attempts were made to destroy the charm either by baths of hot water, to take off the " ointments or hidden grease," or else by pouring cold water into the mouth, or else by making them drink for three days running, while the Holy Trinity was invoked, a full glass of holy water in which a drop of consecrated wax had been infused.

When the interrogatory was concluded, the accused was sent back to prison, but was never left alone there. It was strongly recommended that he should always be given a companion to keep watch on him and obtain from him some avowal by passing himself off as a sorcerer, in order the better to win his confidence.

When the interrogatory was finished the judge communicated the result to the Royal Procurator, or to the Seigneurial Procurator in the case of seigneurial jurisdiction.

It was at this point that the procedure of the trial was decided, and, according to its gravity, it was taken as an ordinary trial, or made subject to extraordinary measures. If ordinary, it remained a simple civil trial, whose result would be merely the infliction of damages or other financial penalties : if extraordinary, its issue was the supreme afflictive and ignominious penalty, the penalty of death ; this was the procedure for the arch-criminal, properly so called.

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[1] Boguet, *Instruction,* art. xii.

After examination of the documents, the judges ordered that the accusation should be proceeded with by way of verification of evidence and confrontation.

The verification was the confirmation before the judge of the evidence which had already been assembled. This reiteration was a semblance of a guarantee, for its function seemed to be to eliminate evidence too lightly given or inexactly set down. Then came the confrontation. Witnesses and accused were confronted with one another. The witnesses identified the accused. The accused learnt, and only then, the denunciations that had been made against him.

Face to face, the prisoner and the witness both took oath not to depart from the truth. The clerk of the court proclaimed the name, address, and particulars of the witness ; the sorcerer formulated his denials, and had to prove them himself. Then the depositions were read to him and the witness had to reiterate again, facing the accused.

A second *proces-verbal* was drawn up.

Thus completed, the evidence was presented to the fully-assembled tribunal, or court. A commissary judge made a report on the case, and the accused was again brought in. He was seated on the culprit's bench, in the presence of all the judges.

The prisoner produced his defence, again adduced his justifications, which could be a denial, an alibi, a provocation, a legitimate defence, and the judges deliberated, after having him removed.

If the proofs were sufficient, they could pronounce a definitive judgment. Otherwise they ordered torture, which was proceeded to on the spot.

Torture was applied only five or six hours after a meal, for fear " lest the sorcerer vomit."

The form of the torture was at first infinitely varied. For a long time it depended solely upon the cruel imagination of the torturers[1] ; each district had, one might say, its speciality. At Paris the speciality was the strappado, assisted by the absorption of water, or the boot as well ; in the jurisdiction of the Parlement of Brittany, it was fire ; in that of Rouen, the crushing of fingers, at Besançon, the rack ; at Toulouse, boiling oil was poured over the accused's feet. Sometimes needles were driven in between the

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Zangerus, *De quaest. seu Tormentis norum,* chap. iv.

nails and the flesh of the toes and fingers. In other places, following an Italian custom, Gehenna consisted in the prevention of sleep.

The commissary judge asked questions, and, through his clerk, noted the smallest details of the operation. He noted each of the words which escaped from the tortured person, who, once again, had taken the oath. Not one of his cries, gestures, silences, or even faintings escaped the dry record of the minute-book. The judge " shall have the accused stripped, and bound and given up to the torture, and shall make it continual without any emotion and with a calm judgment until the moment that he perceives that the tortured person is incapable of suffering further."

Time alone stayed the magistrate's fury. It was, in fact, prescribed that the torture should not last more than an hour, but it could be repeated thrice on three different days.

This triple torment still seemed an inadequate weapon. Sprenger's idea was not to reiterate it, but to continue it. Thus a séance was only *suspended* until the following one, and its multiplication counted only as one operation :

> *Poterit ad veritatem induci, tunc pro secunda an tertia die questionanda ad continuandum tormenta non ad interandum.*[1]

It may be said that, until the edict of 1670, the torture could be repeated indefinitely, according to the pleasure of the judge. A witch named Holf was *continued* fifty-six times.

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[1] *Malleus Malef.*, p. 19.

The only care taken—and that was the limit of the judge's power (at least in principle)—was that the body of the criminal should come from the executionary chamber " neither torn apart nor broken."[1]

Immediately after the torture the accused was interrogated again, this time without constraint. For the point was to make him confirm his confession apart from the torture : " in order that, the fear of the question or torture or vehement pain having ceased, and being somewhat appeased, one may see whether, in freedom, he will persevere in the confession he made in the torture chamber."[2]

When the dossier was completed it was transmitted to the tribunal, which assembled in the morning, before midday. An examination of the documents took place, an investigating judge reading them. The accused was present, and he was interrogated for the last time.

The judges deliberated and sentence was pronounced.

If the proofs were insufficient, the accused was declared absolved or beyond the power of the court. But the judges had within their reach certain means of eventually retaking the victim who escaped them.

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[1] See especially *Grand coustumier*, deuxième partie, tit. xiii.

[2] Imbert, III., chap. xiv., No. 6.

They could declare at their good pleasure that he would be more fully investigated, and the fuller investigation could be at a fixed or at an indefinite time. This indefinite adjournment was called the *quousque* ; it freed the accused from prison, but allowed him to be taken again at any moment, without a new decree, upon the slightest indication.

The adjournment sometimes included an order to remain indefinitely in prison : " it is a wise proceeding which has been thought out for those cases where there is insufficient proof either to proceed to a condemnation or to absolve the accused completely."[1]

For the crime of witchcraft, the suitable punishment was death by fire, " as observed from of old throughout all Christendom."

It had been applied first in Spain, " since the reign of Ramiras, who used it in the year 844."

For a short time, particularly in Flanders, it had been considered whether it were best to drown the witches, but this practice had been abandoned because it had been found that " when they are thrown into the water, their feet and hands tied together, they cannot drown themselves unless their heads are forced under water."

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[1] *Muyart de Vouglans*, p. 79.

Thus fire remained as the sole method to be applied.

However, the judges had reserved to themselves the right of softening this penalty in certain cases. A prompt and voluntary confession, accompanied by signs of repentance, made the magistrates more indulgent. Then they ordered that the condemned should be " strangled against a stake " before being burnt alive. This certainly was a diminishment of the penalty. Often the order was given to the executioner without the accused being told of it. It was a secret leniency which did not appear in the judgment, and which was prescribed personally.

At the same time the judgment ordered that the preliminary torture should be proceeded to. It was a punishment accessory to the punishment of death, intended to compel the revelation of the names of accomplices. The preliminary torture was ordinary or extraordinary. It is unnecessary to give a description, for it was identical with the preparatory torture.[1] It was also prescribed that all the books of magic should be burnt.[2]

The judgment was read to the accused by the clerk in the presence of the investigating judge. The culprit heard it kneeling.[3]

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[1] Jousse, Liv. II., p. 485 ; *Muyart de Vouglans*, p. 656.

Constitution of Popes Pius IV and Clement VIII. [3] Jousse, II., p. 532.

The sentence was carried out on the same day.

As soon as judgment had been pronounced a priest brought to the condemned the comforts of religion.

The accused had to confess and to receive absolution. There was grave controversy as to whether the Eucharist could be administered to him. Sometimes it was refused, " and this custom is founded upon the respect and reverence in which the Holy Sacrament must be held."

A sufficient time was allowed to elapse for the Host to be dissolved.

Generally the necessary time was calculated to be four hours. Extreme Unction was formally forbidden : " It is beyond doubt that it must be denied to the sorcerer, as also to all others guilty of death and condemned."[1]

As soon as this time had elapsed, the culprit was burnt according to the form prescribed by the definitive judgment.

The ashes had to be scattered to the wind.

With this scattering the criminal trial was concluded.

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[1] Boguet, Instruction lxxxviii.

CHAPTER IX

THE MODERN DEVIL

A few critical minds had, quite early, certain doubts as to the reality of the wonders attributed to the Demon. In a curious work printed in Cologne in 1489,[1] Ulric Molitor, wishing to convince the Archduke Sigismond of Austria of the necessity of undertaking prosecutions, thought to gain his end by publishing a dialogue between a sceptic and a theologian. The sceptic's objections, which reproduce the arguments of the day, are evidence that belief in the Demon was meeting serious criticism. In the sixteenth century this criticism became more frequent ; however, it remained timid until the eighteenth century.

If the reasons for this timidity are sought, they can be found without any difficulty in the writings even of those authors who wished to demonstrate the folly of the accusations. Fervent Christians, writing at a period when impiety seemed monstrous, they could not detach themselves sufficiently from their beliefs to deny facts which were the mainstay of dogma.

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[1] *Des Sorcières et des devineresses* (reproduit en facsimilé, 1926 ; Nourry, Edit.).

The Devil was, and still is, taught by the Catholic Church as an incontrovertible fact. To deny him is to deny one of the most definite teachings of religion. The existence of the Devil is as incontrovertible as the very existence of God Himself. God, the good angels, and the bad angels, formed an indivisible whole. To discuss and deny any part was to attack the very basis of belief, which was not possible. Since the atheists, of course, dared say nothing, the prudent sceptics, in an age when religious questions were resolved by civil war and massacre, for a long time never broached the question directly. Urged by their desire to end the trials, which filled them with indignation, they always began by stating their faith in the fundamental teachings of the Church ; then they simply sought to demonstrate that, in their eagerness to pursue the Spirit of Evil, the theologians and judges had exaggerated ; if the power of the Demon could not be denied, at least the manifestations of it were extremely rare, and the alleged witches, with their witchcraft, were more often diseased persons than true agents of Satan. They were the precursors of the present doctrine of the Church, which has changed nothing of its dogma, and cannot do so, but which to-day so rarely recognises the material intervention of the Devil among men that one may say, in fact, that it no longer concerns itself with it. In the second part of this book the arguments of the first physicians who, courageously, set themselves against the abuses of witchcraft will be set forth.

Pomponacius, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, asserted that he could heal the possessed with hellebore ; the Jesuit Kircher at Würzburg and Reginald Scott in England attempted to show that in the majority of cases the wonders of magic were caused solely by physical or chemical agencies ; to-day we should call them prestidigitation.

Wier, a pupil of Cornelius Agrippa, wrote :

> There are certain men, who are foolish, foolhardy, and audacious, who call themselves men of the Church, but are ultra-worldly, by reason of their vile and filthy life, such as is demanded by him who plays the principal part in this farce ; and when they are called in to heal those who are thought to be bewitched or demoniac, by their accustomed exorcisms and by the formulæ of certain ceremonies, they seek to cure the disease and cast out the Devil, who sometimes does retire of his own free will by means of their execrable blasphemies, and takes sport thus to establish and confirm impiety. It would be a good deed to set these exorcists in the ranks of the witches and wizards.[1]

Spee, a German monk, is no less violent in his protests, and his translator, the physician Bouvot, blames the tribunals, and demands that the physicians should be consulted first of all, and that the magistrate should free himself " from all prejudice."

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[1] Wier, op. cit., V. 23.

Perhaps the most remarkable of all the opponents of the classical doctrine is Nicolas, King's counsellor and master of the pleas in the Parlement of Franche-Comté, in Burgundy, who made honourable amends after having himself judged witches. Very courageously he affirmed that :

> Out of a hundred Sabbaths, one could say with certainty, were it not for the fear of being called an advocate of the witches, that there are perhaps not two real ones.[1]

And again :

> There are witches, and real transvections and Sabbaths, but their verification is so difficult that the most able theologians could not be sure of them.

Montaigne does not hide his contempt for the witches. He had wished to see some, and in the prisons he had only encountered women he thought demented.[2] Pierre Charron, speaking of imagination, said : " It is from the imagination that proceed the greater number of things which the populace call miracles, visions, and enchantments."[3] Malebranche also maintained that wizards were created by the imagination, and that the prosecutions fortified belief in them and multiplied errors of faith. Ménage had regarded the possession of the nuns of Loudun as delusional.

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[1] *Si la torture est un moyen sûr à vérifier les crimes secrets* (Amsterdam, 1681).

[2] *Essais*, chap. " Des Boiteux."

[3] *Sagesse*, i. 17.

Bayle, a great sceptic, but nevertheless harassed by some vestiges of religion, still approaches the problem frankly in his *Réponse aux questions d'un provincial* :

> The people must be persuaded that magic is incapable of achieving anything, and, when this opinion has once been introduced, twenty years will suffice to divest the witches of all credit. Experience proves that punishment does not diminish their number. This reason has decided the Parlement of Paris to discharge all witches not convicted of poisoning. When it condemns some of them, it avoids inserting anything in its decrees which might be capable of encouraging the popular belief in sorcery. . . . Those who deny everything are more useful than is supposed ; without them there would be nothing but tales filled with marvellous happenings. They compel a closer attention.

These opinions could not fail to have some repercussion. As we have just seen, the Parlement of Paris had practically given up the prosecution of witches in the second half of the seventeenth century. But things were not the same in the provinces. In 1670, forty-six witches were arrested at Rouen. Many of them, being put to the torture, had confessed. After a lengthy trial, twelve were condemned to death, and thirty-four awaited the decision of a justice, which did not seem likely to prove clement. The petitions of the families of the condemned reached the King. Louis XIV commuted the punishment into lifelong banishment from their provinces, and had the accused released. Immediately the Parlement of Rouen addressed remonstrances to the sovereign. The remonstrances drew attention to the constancy of jurisprudence since the end of the fifteenth century, and the necessity for the most terrible repression. The magistrates concluded thus :

> After all these considerations, Sire, the officers of your Parlement hope of the justice of your Majesty, that it may hold agreeable the very humble remonstrances which they take the liberty of making to it, and that being obliged for the acquittal of their consciences and the duty of their charges to make known to it that the decrees which have been concluded at the judgment of the witches in its jurisdiction have been given with the grave deliberation of those who took part in the tribunal, and that having done nothing save what is conformable to the universal jurisprudence of the kingdom and for the good of all subjects, of whom none can say that their witchcraft can go unpunished, may your Majesty permit the carrying out of the decrees in the form in which they have been given, and permit us to continue the investigation and judgment in the trials of those persons accused of sorcery, and that the piety of your Majesty may not suffer that during your reign there shall be introduced a new spirit contrary to the principles of religion, for which your

Majesty has always so gloriously employed your labours and your arms.

Louis XIV upheld his decision, and put an end to the dispute in 1682 by an edict for the punishment of diviners, wizards, sorcerers, and poisoners. Magicians are now treated as mere impostors. They are enjoined to leave the kingdom. In future those only are to be condemned who have used poisons and have practised enchantments.

The critical spirit had made great progress.

Nevertheless, there were still many who, because of Catholic doctrine, continued to believe in the ancient Satanic superstitions. The Church might declare them less frequent; it could not repudiate them.

The Instruction of the Apostolic Chamber, published at Rome in 1657, had taken the first step, recognising that grave errors had slipped into the trials, and blaming the judges for the vexations, the unjust imprisonments, and the tortures. It recommended that a medical diagnosis should always be sought before proceeding to trial, and it observed that too many magistrates had considered that possession is caused by witchcraft, and had pursued the alleged witch—a thing "most unreasonable," seeing that the Demon can, without any witchcraft, if God permit him torment the body of a man.

One had to be an unbeliever to deny everything, but undoubtedly scepticism was spreading. Argenson's reports are a proof of this. When in November 1714, a woman complained that she had been bewitched, he made a note to explain that she was mad. When an invocation to the Demon was found upon another, he inscribed upon the margin of the report: "Ridiculous."

Later, the spirit of the Encyclopædists did not spare mockery. In the *Pièces relatives à l'essai sur les mœurs* Voltaire asserts that, in every country where exorcism had ceased, scarcely any further cases of possession or sorcery were found, and that they had ceased entirely among the peoples who had separated from the Roman Church.

In his *Dictionnaire philosophique* he observes that, if there still exist certain theologians who desire prosecutions, "this species of madness becomes more and more rare day by day."

The orthodox belief continued none the less, for all that the repression became less violent. And, though its adepts became less ferocious and less numerous, the doctrine remained fully intact.

In 1718 the Parlement of Bordeaux condemned a witch to be burnt. In 1731 Father Girard underwent a long trial for bewitching and seducing Mademoiselle de la Cadière, but he was acquitted; twelve judges, however, had given their opinion in favour of the punishment of the stake. In 1758 a priest, Robert Pons, was condemned to the galleys for having made superstitious abuse of prayers.

Superstition remained the same. In 1732, in the parish of Laudes, in the diocese of Bayeux, a demoniac epidemic raged for several years, in spite of exorcisms. Twelve doctors of the Sorbonne concluded that it was a case of diabolic possession.

At the same period the Devil still manifested himself in haunted houses. At Amiens, in the Rue de l'Aventure, in 1746, Satan infested a house and made it uninhabitable, and Father Richard, a professor of theology, produced a dissertation, which was approved by the Bishop on the 4th March, 1746, in which he concluded that it would be absurd not to believe the witnesses of both sexes who had confirmed the reality of the phenomena. The people who suffered from convulsions were the occasion of endless discussion, in which the intervention of the Devil was not one of the least serious hypotheses.

Mesmer's *Magnetism* was regarded as criminal. All those who had been illumined by revelations—Cagliostro, Swedenborg, Cazotte—were suspected more or less of magic by the heirs of the classic doctrines.

With the Revolution our laws ceased, definitively, to pay any attention to magicians, save to prosecute them as rogues if they had extorted money from their dupes. By a singular revolution of thought they were no longer to be condemned for having used witchcraft, but for having tried to make people believe in the reality of their witchcraft. Thus, juridically, there is no need to pursue the question in the nineteenth century.

But the history of the Devil in the contemporary epoch remains none the less curious, and deserves our attention for a moment.

If fear of the Demon has disappeared from the law, it has remained living in the hearts of devout Christians. It appears completely incomprehensible unless related directly to the beliefs of the preceding centuries, as we have attempted to display them in our rapid survey.

A singular work by a certain Berbiguier, which appeared in 1821 under the title *Les Farfadets*, is a monument of credulity, and forms a typical enough link between the past and the present. The unhappy author recounts, in memoirs which are defamatory of all his neighbours and friends, his struggles with Demons whom he believed were set on his ruin. Berbiguier set himself to destroy all books on sorcery which came within his reach. It is to him that we owe the almost complete disappearance of *L'Histoire des Spectres*, by le Loyer, and of the engraving of the Sabbath in the works of Lancre.

In 1818 a girl, Annette Trécourt, who lived at Cussey, in the Côte-d'Or, was possessed. She was delivered by exorcism. Similarly, in 1823, at Bordeaux, a woman, Jeanne Sarrau, was a demoniac, and was saved by the prayers ordered by the archbishop on the 25th January, 1823.[1] At Bournel, in Lot-et-Garonne, a woman had the reputation of being a witch. Two neighbours decided to burn her alive on the 12th December, 1824. The witch was saved in time, and the neighbours were condemned by the jury to the pillory and to detention. On the 21st September, 1836, at Laval, an old man accused of having bewitched a child was abominably tortured. And again, in 1836, at Méry, a certain woman called Sestre was martyred on the advice of the doctor, who declared that witchcraft alone could explain an epidemic.[2]

In 1843, at Chanceaux, eight kilometres from Tours, a family named Avril were assaulted by the neighbours, who wished to kill them because of their sorcery. Three years later, in 1846, near Mamers, a child of fourteen, Angélique Cottin, saw her distaff fly out of her hands, the furniture jump about in her room, and the shovels, brands, and tongs dance a saraband. The Academy was informed of the affair by Arago ; it appointed a commission upon the 16th February. The experiments of the learned investigators gave no results. In the same year[1] a domestic became dumb, and only recovered her speech when Masses had been said. At Morzine, in Savoy, in 1857, a veritable epidemic of possession raged.

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[1] *L'Eclaireur du Midi.*

[2] *Le Journal du Cher.*

The history of the presbytery of Cideville, in Seine Inférieure, in March 1849, received the honour of great celebrity and was communicated to the Académie des Inscriptions. A shepherd, Thorel, had thrown a spell upon the house of the *curé*. The movable objects circled through the air. Stones fell. Knocks sounded. The shepherd, beaten with a stick by the *curé*, confessed. The *dénouement* of the affair took place before the justice of the peace at Yerville. The judgment constitutes an official testimony to the diabolic facts, and has not lacked frequent citation.

It is impossible to relate all the prodigies attributed to the Devil in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Among the best known, let us cite the haunted house of Saint-Quentin[2]; that of Vaugirard on the 31st March, 1852; of the evil spirit in the form of a toad sent to a grocer of Sézanne in 1842. This last affair ended before a court martial as a case of roguery.[3]

More recently, at Tours, a former brother of the Christian Schools was accused by certain neighbours of tying the witches' knot, and was condemned by the summary court for having made people give him money by this means.[1] At Bordeaux, in 1920, the adepts of a cult devoted to a miraculous virgin mauled a Syrian archimandrite whom they accused of witchcraft. In 1926 they repeated their crime on the person of a *curé* of the diocese of Meaux.

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[1] *Journal du Loiret*, 10th March, 1846.

[2] *Gazette des Tribunaux*, 20th December, 1849.

[3] Cassagnet, *Magie Magnétique*, pp. 402 *et seq.*

Two important religious movements were attributed to Satanism: that of the Abbé Drevet at Saint-Jean-de-Bonnefond, in Ferez, which recognised the prophet Elijah in a filthy beggar of the name of Digonnet, and which led to a schism in 1847, and, more important, that of Vingtras, founder of the Carmel, or the work of the Miséricorde, at Tilly-sur-Seulles, in Calvados. Wonders were performed, crowds gathered, and the Church accused the Devil. Vingtras was condemned by Gregory XVI in 1843, by the provincial councils in 1849. He was accused of roguery, and he was condemned by the summary court of Caen.

Vingtras disappeared, but his partisans continued his work, and a disciple, Rosette Tamisier de Saint-Saturnin-les-Apt, continued his miracles for some little time. Literature, always avid of the unusual, could not forgo searching Satanism as a still unexploited vein. Certain unbalanced people like the Abbé Boulan, a friend of Huysmans, sought, out of curiosity, to resuscitate the ancient traditions and evoke Lucifer.

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[1] Judgment of 8th January, 1921.

Afterwards, Eliphas Lévi, Huysmans, and Guaita made demonolatry into a literary fashion ; they were lyrical about it, and found it an easy way to success, so true it is that the marvellous always attracts mankind.

Every one of its manifestations, whether in the domain of mystery or religion or literature, has always attracted passionate attention. Doubtless we think that we are very far from the great mystical epidemics of the Renaissance ; it is dull-witted self-deception to think so.

The Christian Devil has remained his identical self in the Christian world.

Dogma, as we have said, has not varied, and Lucifer is a fundamental dogma in the Catholic religion. Several mystical works appeared during the nineteenth century, particularly those of Gorres and Ribet. To-day they have no great practical authority, but they reproduce without variation the ancient tales, basing themselves on the same texts. The diabolic doctrine is indentically the same ; nothing in it can be changed. Each bishop keeps at his side an exorcist priest, an expert in demonology, and the last ritual—that of Pius XI—has as the eleventh title *De* *exorcizandis obsessis a dæmonio*. It is almost a textual reproduction of the manuals of exorcism of the eighteenth century.

What is true is that the Church, which is very prudent, to-day accepts manifestations of the Devil only with the utmost difficulty. Exorcism is practised very rarely. Tacitly it is supposed that Lucifer has provisionally renounced his intervention, whether by possession or by witchcraft, among men.

Indeed, these matters are scarcely mentioned in religious circles. But occasionally, at more or less lengthy intervals, singular scandals break out. Certain persons reveal that the Devil has manifested himself. The public, in general ignorant, is astonished. The sceptics, who believe that reason can dominate faith, exclaim that such beliefs are intolerable in a century when science asserts that it can explain everything. Some speak of mental alienation.

But to reason thus is to ignore the foundations of religion and its profound roots, which reason will never tear up. It is an incontestable fact, which we shall study in the second part of this work, that there are certain insane persons among the demoniacs, but there are degrees, from mystic faith to insanity, and we may say that those who continue to believe in the Devil, and to fear him, speak in the name of a doctrine which is most certain, and which the Church cannot disavow without shaking its very foundation. It only reserves to itself, under the pretext of examination, the right of repudiating, in fact, the instances which are submitted to it.

Thus is the singular and curious persistence, in the twentieth century, of the belief in Lucifer to be explained. The fanatics, who are timid, do not show themselves much. But, when a scandal breaks out, it must not be seen as an isolated phenomenon. It is the logical result of a doctrine which persists, and will persist unchanged as long as the religion which created it endures. Supported upon this pure doctrine, belief in the Devil will never be, by itself, a sign of mental alienation. The Abbé Lecanu, writing in 1882 a history of Satan, began with these words : " In the matter of beliefs, we must return to those of the fifteenth century ; we set forth this aphorism right at the beginning, in order that those who do not feel themselves in agreement with us may not waste their time by reading us."

PART II

CHAPTER I

FROM BELIEF TO DELUSION[1]

Popular judgment often confounds certain beliefs with madness. Belief in the Devil is amongst them. It appears almost pathologic to some, yet religious minds assimilate it perfectly. The doctor and the psychologist cannot accept so relative a truth. They must follow up matters further, and attempt to delimit the territories of belief and of insanity.

If they regard as mad a man who believes in the Devil, they have to arrive at this conclusion—that for centuries entire peoples and diverse civilisations were composed only of the mad. This paradox cannot be sustained.

Again, practice logically follows belief, without thereby drawing upon itself any suspicion of diminished or deviated intelligence. The Christian who submits himself to the guidance of the Church is logical, like the man who prefers to give himself up to the omnipotence of Satan when he invokes him by incantations and signs the covenant with him.

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[1] *Délire* in the French.

However, in spite of the return to occultism which has followed the War, this second case is exceptional. At the present time people's minds turn more readily towards spiritualism and its bourgeois, almost family, cult, than towards black magic, which still keeps them at a distance through an inherited terror. Those who dare to face this terror have a peculiar psychology, of which Solomon is the type—Solomon, the ruler of the Demons, the inspiration of all spells since far antiquity. They are perhaps unbalanced people, but they are not mad, so long as they keep complete control of their actions. We can form some idea of them from an Eliphas Lévi or a Stanislas de Guaita, who are in some sort poets. Aristocratically, they dominate the world of magicians. But the peasant who goes to ask the humble sorcerer the secret of ruling men and things, participates, too, in the same tendencies as the masters of occultism.

After the historical argument, is it possible to draw from the observation of facts a criterion which may serve to separate belief from delusion ?

Belief and faith are supported upon revelation. This structure is the result of the intuition of the founder of religion. He conceived a system which should satisfy the moral and metaphysical tendencies of a great number of men. Religious faith is collective ; contrary in this to delusion, which is most often individual, and only spreads in specialised conditions. The different methods of their evolution show the different nature of the two orders of facts.

Delusion feeds upon morbid manifestations ; hallucination, errors of the imagination or of the judgment. It is maintained by these manifestations, above all when they depend upon some systematic deviation of the reason (delusional interpretation).

But religious faith can become the starting-point of delusion, as soon as it leaves its collective manifestations and becomes individual once more.

Belief in the Devil is among the dogmas of a great number of religions. From a symbolic, it tends to become a tangible, reality, at certain periods of a religion's evolution. It is in this latter event that it can serve as the subject-matter of a delusion.

The origin of the belief in the Devil among Christians has been shown at the beginning of this book. He who is curious about the infernal mysteries, ambitious to control the forces of evil, the Demon-worshipper in the lunatic asylum, is really a religious mind, but of a special variety. It seems that here we can perceive a regression of the religious feeling to its most instinctive form.

This instinct, which seeks to enter into relation with the supernatural, expresses itself in the formulæ and practices of magic, which seek to win powers of control ; by studies in occult science, and by moral discipline. Through magic the world is explained, and, above all, dominated.

The magian is a demoniac at the height of his powers ; the sorcerer is a degenerate magician. Both of them summon spirits to their aid, and they both run the risk, if they prove to be the weaker, or if they have made some error in the ritual which guides them, of becoming the victims, in their turn, of the spirit forces.

Freud, following Frazer, makes the omnipotence of ideas the basis of magic. The author of *Totem and Taboo* quotes a phrase from *The Magic Art* which resumes this thesis :

> Men mistook the order of their ideas for the order of nature, and hence imagined that the control which they have, or seem to have, over their thoughts, permitted them to have a corresponding control over things.[1]

The belief in the omnipotence of ideas is taken by the psycho-analysts as evidence of *Narcissism*, in which the subject refers back upon himself his own desires. In his magic phase man is the centre and the master of the world ; in the religious phase he refers his desires towards an exterior object, who is God, the symbol of the parents ; later, in the scientific phase, he will renounce the pleasure of satisfying his urges, and will only give himself up to the study of immediate reality.

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[1] Sigm. Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, " The Omnipotence of Thought," p. 125.

Primitive man is a child who has not outgrown the first stage. The neuropath and the unbalanced individual have stopped at the same point in their development.

If we compare theology with psycho-analysis, the same conclusions are to be drawn. Pride, which, like narcissism, refers everything back to itself, similarly desires the invasion of the world by the ego. It was Satan's first sin, and is often the sin of the wizard. Pride surrenders when the religious feelings become strong. And a popular adage about the modesty of the true scientist shows that science, too, represses it.

Hypertrophy of the ego in primitive man, in the unbalanced, or in the neuropath, is accompanied by an exaltation of the instincts, whether normal or perverted. The instinct of domination flows from it directly. The wizard and his clients pursue power and fortune. Then come love and hate, the classic objectives of magical charms. Sexual perversion, from sadism to inversion, can then enter into play. A few rare alchemists there always are who follow Faust's dream, but the greater number prefer the slaking of the humblest appetites to the conquest of knowledge. All of them live in the domain of imagination far more than in that of reality. The Devil is the great deceiver, deliberately producing endless mirages. His disciples march towards them, paying little attention to the effort necessitated by the struggle for life, such as is faced by other men. Sloth comes after pride in the list of deadly sins. It is the mother of all the vices, the liberator of insane fantasies.

But not everything goes smoothly for Satan's flock, and fear awaits them at the turns and twists of the road. To cross the frontiers of space and time, to escape from their constraint towards sombre metaphysics, always brings with it an element of vertigo. The magical books teach methods of protection against fear, by incense, torches, and the name of Christ traced out behind him who is uttering an incantation. As well as the terrifying fear which freezes man's blood where he stands, but is only momentary, the emotions of each day are ever sharpening his imagination and inciting him to find remedies.

The anxiety which is the source of fear is in the last analysis the stimulus of those instincts and that imagination which go to create demoniac states.

The demoniac who is possessed or obsessed is subjected to this obscure force. In him, sometimes from childhood up, crises of depression, accompanied by diverse emotional phenomena, reveal the difficulty of contact with life. His unsatisfied mind suffers more than others from the disquiets of puberty, from a sadness and lassitude whose cause escapes him. Anxiety is born. Life becomes unbearable to him, since he never realises his dreams. From his childhood his belief in the supernatural offers him a refuge against reality in enchanted palaces and heavenly gardens. But, in virtue of the principle of contrasted association, these delights are close to infernal abysses. The mystics pass from one to the other, and at the end find again the road to heaven. Many demoniacs are only mystics stopped upon the way.

The Church has understood this danger. It prescribes to confessors that they should ceaselessly rouse their penitents to watchfulness against the errors of the imagination. It knows, with St. Theresa, how to recognise these even when they approach closest to the ravishment of ecstasy. In ecstasy the superior faculties of the soul exercise themselves freely ; the will is not abolished, it is fully given up to God. But ecstatic swooning, on the contrary, is only a physical state, in which the will yields control to an ill-disguised sensuality. St. Theresa recommends her daughters to avoid falling into this state. Ecstatic swooning is produced more easily in weakened subjects ; it leaves after it lassitude, weariness, a disgust with effort and with life, as opposed to the true ecstasy, which is the generator of spiritual energy. Finally, ecstatic swooning can easily be interrupted if an onlooker utters a few fairly sharp words.[1]

This inferior form of ecstasy comprises at the same time emotional and imaginative phenomena as in the case of hysterical crises. It is sensations which set going these reverie-states which sometimes do not evolve from this stage, but at other times develop into real, if transient, madness.

This sort of delusion has been described under the name of dream-delusion. The subject has the illusion that he is living a long and intense dream, which lasts for days, even for weeks. He is now the prisoner of the imagination from which he asked aid. This sort of dream is accompanied by most vivid images, of hallucinatory force, which create a background, and people it with adequate forms. In the scenery of hell, amidst odours of sulphur or corruption, black men, Devils, assault the sufferer and try to drag him with them. They cry to him : " You are damned without hope of redemption." They pursue him and force him to flee, despite the hands which hold him back. Black cats and black dogs pass like shadows.[1]

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[1] Debreyne, *Théologie morale,* sixième édition refondue par le docteur A. Ferrand Paris, (Poussielgue, 1884), " Diagnostic de l'extase," pp. 254 *et suivantes.*

The visions sometimes take on a fantastic fullness. A demoniac mystic[2] beheld the Demons remove the Holy Sacrament from all the churches and profane it, so that the Catholic cult became impossible. At the same time the monks and nuns were chased from their convents. The whole panorama was unrolled before his eyes as in the famous temptations.

The hallucinatory phantoms threaten by gestures or by words. They unveil the most secret feelings and predict the future, or else they give orders imperiously, and seem to take the subject by the nape of his neck to compel him to obey them. The subject's will fails, and the first step is taken towards the state of possession.

The modern state of possession recalls the descriptions of the old demonologists. It proceeds by crises, beginning by more or less violent and painful sensations. It reaches its apogee in the dissociation of the personality, with a division of the thought and the will.

The demoniac reverie is of variable duration. In its simple form it is only a rather long nightmare, which is unfolded throughout a troubled night. In the slight forms of delusion the hallucinations disappear with the awakening, but reappear as soon as the subject closes his eyes, and isolates himself from the external world, during the day. Graver delusions go on both night and day, and forbid all sleep and rest.

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[1] Regis, précis (Prais, Doin, 1914), *Les Hallucinations dans l'hystérie.*

[2] Jean Vinchon, "Une Mystique du Tyrol," *Journal de Psychologie*, 1926.

This sort of delusion, which has long been described under the name of hysterical aberration, is composed of varieties of confusional states : the dominant symptom of the malady is loss of contact with the external world. If you bring back this contact by some fairly strong exciting stimulus, you will see the ecstatic swooning, the dream, or the delusion (if it is light, or relatively so) disappear during the application of the stimulus. To-day the relationship of hysteria and confusional states has been clearly established by Georges Dumas, following upon his observations in military neurological clinics.

In order that a patient may be withdrawn from a delusional reverie, it is necessary that it shall be of slight intensity ; it is necessary, too, that he shall be capable of some effort, and be able or willing to come forth from it. If the delusion becomes organised in a complex system, which makes allies and aggressors intervene, turn and turn about, the subject will be convinced, whatever we do, that the troubles of his mind are in relation to the realities of the external world.

Under the Restoration, Esquirol and Marc[1] for the first time described *Demonomanias.* These sad and timid delusions, accompanied by discouragement and terror, are capable of becoming epidemic. Demonomanias have specific causes: weak-mindedness, bad education, false ideas, superstitious prejudices, the reading of works of witchcraft and magic. An author of the seventeenth century, the Abbé Bordelon, had shown the imagination of his hero, Monsieur Oufle, troubled by reading of this kind. Some strong moral commotion—terror, a curious or threatening word or look, a vehement sermon, or the force of imitation—suffice to bring on the attack. Widowhood, critical periods, the use of narcotics like stramonium, are the physical causes; they excite the imagination and fix it upon desired and promised happenings. By secondary irritation of the brain, they provoke dreams based upon the ideas, the desires, or the fears of the preceding day. Enchantment through the gaze (the evil eye) plays a considerable rôle as an occasional cause. Ecstasies, instead of being sublime or contemplative, as in the case of the saints, easily become erotic or obscene. The Sabbath is the product of this exalted imagination.

Esquirol and Marc well perceived the main structure of demoniac delusion, with the classic illusions and hallucinations. They grouped their descriptions into a special " monomania," while relating them to other forms of insanity by reason of the fundamental weakness of mind.

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[1] Esquirol, *Des Maladies mentales* (Paris, Ballière, 1838, Tome I., p. 482 et sqq.) ; Marc, *De la folie considérée* . . . (Paris, Baillière, 1840, Tome I., p. 222 et sqq.).

To-day demoniac delusion is divided into two kinds ; we have described the first, with its morbid dreams. The second is that of systematised delusion. In this second group, the *Persécutés possédés* (possessed persecution maniacs) of Seglas[1] are particularly interesting. They are differentiated from the externalising demonopaths, with whom the hallucinations and persecutions do not imply a feeling of loss of personality.

The possessed persecution maniac carries the Devil within him ; he is at once his dwelling-place and his slave. He must submit to his whims, and act according to his sole direction. The Demon speaks through the mouth of the sufferer, thinks with his brain, and acts with his limbs. The delusion of persecution with possession must be distinguished from the analogous confusional and hysterical states described above, and also from delusional anxiety—melancholia. The delusion of the possessed persecution maniac is chronic.

Its principal symptom is hallucination. Voices do not come from without, but from within. They speak in the brain, in the tongue, in the heart, in the abdomen ; they are various and multiple, uttered with terrifying force or small and snuffling like those of a Punch and Judy show. Sometimes thoughts seem to be directly imposed by the Demon, without any voice.

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[1] Seglas, *Leçons cliniques* (Paris, Asselin et Houzeau, 1915), " Les persécutés possédés," pp. 503–604 *et suivantes*.

The voices mock, curse, and command. The sufferer has the feeling that he possesses a multiple personality. He is astonished by ideas which cross his mind but which are opposed to his normal feelings. Only the Demon can have suggested them.

Disorders of both the general and the genital sensibility are very frequent. The patient feels burns, bites, pricks, tearing apart of his limbs, contractions and cramps, electric discharges, icy or burning contacts, every variety of violence and violation. Hot or cold breaths pass over his face ; mysterious cuppings empty him.

Hallucinations of smell and taste—the smell and taste of sulphur, of fæcal matter—complete the picture.

The same troubling of general sensibility is met with in another variety of delusion—hypochondria. These patients have certain characteristics in common with those of possessed persecution maniacs. They interpret their sensations like them, but they consider them as the symptoms of some tumour or cancer or grave tuberculosis.

When the sensations affect the organs of the abdomen, the hypochondriac thinks he can feel some beast, some lizard or serpent, moving about. He creates a very vivid picture ; he believes he can see into his body, and describes the clawings and bites which tear his entrails, the migrations of the animal about his body. The hypochondriac may become, secondarily, possessed.

We have observed delusion of possession appear and disappear in this fashion.

With the hypochondriac it is always possible to find an organic cause—a lesion of the viscera or a modification of the equilibrium of the nervous system—which explains the diseased interpretations. The same organic basis seems probable in delusions of possession. Can these latter be ameliorated by a treatment of it ? The tendency to interpret facts unilaterally persists. The belief in infernal powers is not shaken. But the initial troubles improve. The pains are less intense. Sleep and rest are regained. The patient who comes to the doctor is well aware of the therapeutic possibilities. He asks that he shall be healed of the ill which " he " has inflicted on him. For the casting out of the enemy he has recourse to the priest or the sorcerer. These healers—manipulators of charms—remain helpless before such phenomena, despite the confidence which they inspire. They often aggravate the malady, as does the doctor who is ignorant of its exact nature, by maladroit methods, which become a new stimulus, reinforcing the initial ones.

The possessed persecution maniac is forced to speak, to utter curses, to mock, to threaten, by the entity who is haunting him. He is forced to go out, to run, to walk, to strike blows, to commit evil actions, sometimes to commit suicide or do violence to the beings who are most dear to him. These troubles, which are called psycho-motor, are evidence of a completely dissociated personality, which has lost the direction of its actions after the control of its ideas.

Patients, in this phase, have no longer any notion of their bodies or their minds. They even deny their existence. Their heads and their bodies have disappeared or become empty; such ideas of negation are not at all exceptional in the delusion of the possessed persecution maniac.

The hallucinations and illusions and interpretations have become organised into a system in the course of the evolution of these mental troubles. Against the attacking system of the Devil there is opposed a mystical defence system, with the friendly intervention of the heavenly powers, of God and the angels and saints. Here we see a " compensation " of the dolorous delusional disorders, a resultant of their evolution. This compensation may appear much more quickly in other psychic forms of demonomania.

Then the imagination reconstitutes around the demoniac a new world and life, both fantastic. Less effort is required to live this dream-life than to adapt oneself to reality. It is enough to let oneself drift on the current of fantasy. The patient looks on at his dreams as if he were at the theatre. He gives himself up to them as if to a game, drawing no logical conclusion whatever from his delusions. His activity is small, "alienated" in every sense of the word, having lost relationship with the surrounding world.

His external life is wholly automatic. Strange and disconcerting rhythms repeat the same gestures, the same words, the same attitudes, when he is left to himself. His activity is always inadequate to meet the circumstances. His acts and his words flow from the same mould ; they are *stereotyped*. If the observer tries to draw the dreamer away from his dreams, he encounters, now a plasticity, and now a resistance, which are equally inexplicable.

The group of urges which determine the direction of the morbid reveries is concentrated into a nucleus which has become the new soul of the patient—a hermetically closed soul for whomsoever does not hold the key of the symbols in which the instinctive urges have veiled themselves ; a soul which sometimes expresses itself by drawings which reveal the existence of a chimerical country, peopled by unreal beings. Thus we have seen, in a collection of the drawings of madmen, a strange Black Mass served by erotic demons which was the work of a young girl. This argument has weight in favour of the explanation of the maladies of the mind by repression.

Dupré and his pupils described in 1910 a delusion based upon imaginative processes. This is a mythomaniacal fabulation pushed to an extreme point. But in order to lie one must have someone to lie to. The sufferers of whom we are thinking usually do without any one.

The Swiss psychiatrist, Bleuler, describes these patients under the name of *Schizophrenics* (from the Greek root *schizo*, meaning the breach separating the imagination at one and the same time from the surrounding world and from the rest of the *psyche*). Chaslin has given them the more French appellation of *fous discordants*.

Having taken as our starting-point the instinctive belief in the supernatural, we have journeyed through all the degrees of the delusional imagination acting upon demoniac themes, hysterical possession, confusional states, systematised delusion of the possessed persecution maniac, and the schizophrenic, in whom triumphant imagination installs itself upon the ruins of the *psyche*.

Anxiety appears as the lever which puts the imaginative mechanism into play in the greater number of cases of mental malady. It continues to act, or disappears, according to the example observed. The neuropath will be, turn and turn about, in a state of anxiety and of imagination, while the schizophrenic will have forgotten the initial anxiety, so complete is his dream.

The opposite of the patient, who is the victim of his dreams, is the wizard, who seeks through them the secret and the mastery of the world. But he, too, has set forth on a tortuous path. He may meet his end therein, but it is not inevitable. With him, as with his clients, we can perceive a disposition to disequilibrium, to the pride which makes the mind unbalanced, to perversions, and to the exaltation of the instincts. But we must refuse to consider him diseased as long as he does not present the symptoms of the psychoses and neuroses which we have just sketched.

CHAPTER II

THE GENESIS OF MODERN IDEAS ABOUT DEMONIACS

The first observers to raise doubts, in the Middle Ages, about the nature of demoniac states were the theologians. The monk Nider, who lived in Alsace and at Bâle in the fifteenth century, records interesting observations in this connection.[1]

The first case noted is that of a native of Cologne who believed his body suddenly doubled. He reasoned, however, about his state, and told himself that the thing was impossible, that he was assuredly deceiving himself. But, once abed, the illusion returned. A double of himself was lying at his side. A doctor restored his courage, urged him to make use of the Sacraments, and freed him from the illusion of duplication. To Nider this was an example of mania.

A young woman, well born and rich, believed herself possessed, and had lived in retirement for four years. Her family had exhausted every means of distracting her, but all had failed. She had fallen into a state of depression bordering on marasmus. The fear of being pursued by the law tormented her continually. Nider recognised melancholia in this patient. He set himself to restore her confidence. He managed to obtain influence over her, calmed her, and restored her to health.

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[1] Calmeil, *De la Folie considérée au point de vue pathologique, philosophique, historique, et judiciaire* (Paris, Baillière, 1845), Vol. I., p. 119.

At Vienna, the father of a family was tormented by a lively moral distress, after committing an action the reverse of delicate. The doctors perceived that he was ill, but, in view of the progressive severity of the symptoms, urged him to receive the Sacrament. His condition continued to grow worse. He thought himself dead. He refused to drink, to eat, to carry out his other functions. Soon he died. This story resembled that of many other demoniacs of the time. Yet Nider did not consider the Demon, but the disease.

A man of high rank and great wealth of a sudden persuaded himself that he was ruined and condemned to beg, and became so affected by it that he died. His son fell into an analogous state. Both, according to the theologian, were diseased.

Another melancholic believed himself damned, surrounded by the flames of hell. God had condemned him without mercy to this appalling fate. He recovered, thanks to the use of hypnotics, a sudorific, and strenuous moral treatment. His illness was due to disorders of the imagination.

Finally, an eminent professor, in spite of the apparent integrity of his intelligence, felt himself driven to suicide. Religious aid did not cure him of this mania.

All the observations of the theologian Nider have been noted in the *Malleus Maleficarum* (1604 edition, pp. 542-4). They did not prevent Sprenger from drawing up that code of sorcery wherein facts of a medical order mingle with superstitions, regardless of the critical efforts of his predecessor.

The increasing extent of the epidemics of sorcery stimulated the zeal of the inquisitors in the very worst direction, and, by a vicious circle, they, by their procedure, created fresh sorcerers. The evil soon became general in Europe.

During the first years of the sixteenth century, independent minds began to suspect the nature of this evil, and began to struggle against it.

A strange man was Cornelius Agrippa, the initiator of the movement which ended by delivering the witches and the possessed from the stake. Rabelais has depicted him playfully under the name of Herr Trippa in the third book of *Pantagruel*. Born at Cologne in 1486, soldier, lawyer, doctor, occultist, theologian, he travelled in France, Spain, Italy. In the course of one stage of his errant life, in 1519, he sheltered under his roof a peasant-woman accused of witchcraft. The people of Metz rose in revolt, and he had to give up his functions as syndic. In 1522 for the first time he remembered that for eighteen years he had possessed the doctor's bonnet. He began to practise medicine. But, helpful to the humble, he did not know how to manage the mighty. Queen Louise of Savoy, the mother of Francis I, wished to have her horoscope cast by him. He refused, and lost his position under her. He ended by taking refuge at Antwerp, under the protection of a Mæcenas of alchemy. The close of his life was spent partly in prison and partly in beggary, and he died in 1554 in the house of the president Vachon, who had taken him in.

His work is as strange as his life. It consists of two books, which contradict each other, although they were published almost simultaneously. One of these books—*De Occulta Philosophia, libri tres* (1531)—is a veritable manual of occultism. The other—*De Incertitudine et Venitate Scientiarum*—is the breviary of a sceptic ; he utterly condemns all the sciences, occult and otherwise (1527).

We may judge from this of the confusion which reigned in his mind, and which was probably not exceptional at a time when so many new ideas were in ferment. In his conduct there is the same contradiction. His opponents reproach him with knowing only too well how to profit by occultism, while his disciple, Jean Wier, affirms his courage in the struggle against the inquisitors, then all-powerful. He stands up before the fearsome judges and accuses them of multiplying the fines, of which they get a part, and of confiscating too readily the belongings of the heretics.

Cornelius Agrippa was the master of Jean Wier, who defended his memory. Wier set himself particularly to show that he was not a wizard, and did not belong to the company of the " infamous magicians." His dog, Monsieur, was only a faithful animal. The passage where the pupil exculpates his old master sets in a clear light the state of contemporary thought as soon as sorcery was suspected :[1]

> I have seen and intimately known the dog in question, which was black and of medium size, called Monsieur ; and at the time when I was living with Agrippa I used often to take him out on a leash. But it was a real male dog, which had as female a bitch of the same size and colour, called Mademoiselle. The dog shared the meals and studies of his master, and it was whispered that he learnt the news of every country from the dog, which was the Devil. But in truth he learnt it from letters which wise men used to send him from all parts.

Bourneville, a pupil of Charcot, accords to Jean Wier the merit of having been a precursor of the Salpêtrière school. This school classified demonopathies with hysteria, hystero-epilepsy, and mental alienation. This is almost exactly the modern view. We would add this reservation—that hysteria does not explain all mystic or demoniacal occurrences, but only some of these manifestations.

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[1] Jean Wier, op. cit., L. II., chap. v.

Jean Wier was born at Grave-sur-Meuse, in Brabant, in 1515. He was a great traveller, like Cornelius Agrippa. From France he went to Africa and to Crete before settling down in Germany, where he lived for thirty years as doctor to the Duke of Clèves. He died in Westphalia in 1586.

In order to understand the interpretation of demoniacal occurrences according to Jean Wier, one must acquire an exact idea of what the ancients called melancholy.

Melancholy is not a malady, but a temperament. The writers of the sixteenth century, pupils of the doctors of antiquity, described melancholics as self-contained and sad, given to solitary meditation. These patients are thin and pale, with a dry, dark skin ; their appearance is austere, their expression severe. Timid yet obstinate, they dissimulate violent passions, which show themselves only in occasional outbursts. By their nature they are exposed to a continual disturbance of the viscera, contrary to the integrity of the human economy, to spasms, to obstructions of the organs. These physical disorders trouble them ceaselessly. We find here, again, the signs of constitutional anxiety, with a predisposition to painful emotions, and, at the same time, imaginative exaltation. These two conditions are favourable to the development of the inner life.

The melancholic, according to Jean Wier, is given to depravations of the imagination. This, again, reacts in its turn upon the sensibility and the organic life, provokes errors of the senses, loosens or contracts the bowels. If he is, in addition, weak-minded, the melancholic may easily be tormented by phantoms. Young children, women, timid or delicate men, sick people, are attacked "by fear and empty dreams, on account as much of their minds as of their bodies." The phantoms born of these influences are all attributed to the Devil. The illnesses in which these disturbances and visions are encountered are drunkenness, madness, and melancholia. Frenzy, in the sixteenth century, recalls the dream-delusions of confusional states. Melancholia becomes an illness when the temperamental tendencies culminate in delusions.

The Devil not only makes images appear, but convinces the patient of their reality.

If the wizard and the demoniac are such on account of their melancholy, has one the right to punish them ?

Authors like Jean Wier, who believed in the action of the Devil on the imagination, limited his power to that. They refused him the power of knowing secret thoughts by divination, quoting St. Augustine and St. Anselm, who were of the same opinion. The divination of thought, which plays a considerable part in the delusions of the possessed persecution maniacs, had, therefore, no existence in Wier's demoniacs.

The *Discours des illusions et impostures du Diable*, in the middle of the sixteenth century, summed up the opinion which was beginning to prevail in medical circles and among certain priests. To be sure, this was not a unanimous movement, but a series of individual protests. Some took the point of view of medical science ; others spoke in the name of charity. All, in taking their stand against the Inquisition, claimed as theirs the true doctrine of the Church, and quoted the Fathers in support of their theses.

If one makes a topographical map of these protestations, one observes that they all come from the valley of the Rhine, from Bâle to the Low Countries ; that almost all the leaders of the movement are Rhenish. The opposition had already begun in 1484, before the Bull was promulgated by Innocent VIII proclaiming the nomination of the inquisitors Henry Institor and James Sprenger by apostolic letters.

The protesting laymen and clergy, some of them Rhenish, preceded Cornelius Agrippa and Jean Wier. Towards 1550 the protests were continued. A bishop had set at liberty a witch who had been condemned to death by the judges. William, Duke of Clèves, sent his chaplains to the wizards to bring them back gently to the right path. The Count of Niuwenar contented himself with banishing them. The Count of Mont restored her liberty to a woman eighty-one years old, accused of witchcraft.

Jean Wier made many investigations into the cases of demoniacs, and made propaganda for his ideas. After drawing support for his opinions from the authority of the Fathers, Athanasius, St. Martin, St. Augustine (who considered excommunication sufficient), he invoked the aid of laymen—Erasmus, the jurists Paul Grilland, the author of a treatise on witchcraft, and Andrew Alciat, who was not afraid to attack a particularly cruel inquisitor. Finally, playing his adversaries the cruellest trick, he appealed to Sprenger himself. To the inquisitors he opposed the magistrates of Bologna, who had no punishment for sorcerers but the whip, the stocks, and exile. Women in particular ought to benefit by indulgence ; it was they who were most often attacked.

In conclusion, Jean Wier placed himself under the rule of the Catholic Church, declaring himself "ready to amend and to deny what I have said if in any point I am convicted of error."

Ideas so new and so daring threatened to raise a storm in public opinion, coming on the very morrow of the triumph of the demonological doctrines, the bases of the Inquisition's proceedings. Bodin undertook to refute them, with the support of inquisitors such as Del Rio and Barthélemy de l'Epine. To compromise the man appeared to him the best means of overthrowing the doctrine. Jean Wier, disciple of Cornelius Agrippa, could not be other than a wizard. He had too often delved in books of spells, such as the steganography of Trithemius. His arguments, drawn from the Fathers, were scientifically distorted. The explanation of demonological phenomena by madness, by the use of poisons such as hashish, could not be sustained. If the melancholic temperament generates madness, it also produces wisdom. Jean Wier, according to Bodin, is only a blasphemer and an impostor.

Wier's book was not to bear fruit at once. It smelt of heresy to the greater part of the public. However, the idea that possession and certain illnesses sent by wizards might be similar to natural illnesses gradually became general. At the end of the sixteenth century, Henri Boguet, one of the severest of judges, wrote :

> I am unable to agree with Philo the Hebrew or the others, who hold that an illness, invoked by sorcery, cannot be healed by the doctors, such as colic, paralysis, apoplexy, epilepsy, which proceed from putrefaction or from other natural causes, so that I find it not very difficult that the doctors are unable to cure of such diseases those who are afflicted with them.[1]

A solid wedge had been driven by Jean Wier into the block of demonological doctrine, which was beginning to disintegrate.

This did not mean—indeed, quite the contrary—that the pursuit of witches ceased with the advent of more liberal views. From Lorraine to the Basque country, sorcerers and demoniacs were condemned *en masse* by merciless tribunals. The first editions of the *De præstigiis dæmonium*, by Jean Wier, were dated from Bâle, *ex officina oporiana*, 1568. Twenty years later, a compiler, John Schenck, published his collection of *Rare Observations* at Frankfort, 1584 to 1587. This Rhenish doctor practised his profession during the second half of the sixteenth century at Strasbourg and Fribourg.

John Schenck studies *incubi* at the beginning of the chapter on melancholia, following Horstius, who had taught the natural origin of this hallucinatory nightmare.[1] The cause of the incubus-delusion is the obstruction of the vessels which connect the spleen to the stomach by the thickening of the melancholic juices, which are converted into black bile. The principal symptom consists of a sensation of oppression, as if the weight of a heavy load were preventing the patient from breathing. Horrible dreams accompany this sensation. Fear of violence is combined with the illusion of carnal intercourse with the Devil in the course of the dreams. The argument of Jean Wier, that the hymen remained intact after the visit of the incubus, retained its full force for Schenck.

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[1] Henri Boguet, op. cit., chap. xliv.

As for the demoniacs, John Schenck, while bowing to the opinion of his time, does not hesitate to consider them first and foremost as sick people.

> Demoniacs are cured, even after the prayers of the Church, by the care of the doctor. . . . The happenings which appear occult, and foreign to natural causes, may sometimes be encountered in illnesses within the knowledge and experience of all.

We read in this collection of observations that the missionaries, specially charged with the conversion of sorcerers, often called in the doctors. They asked them to diagnose melancholia, if it existed, and even to treat the physical trouble when possession had been recognised. Priests and doctors took part together in the therapy, the former blessing the drugs which the latter prescribed. Fragments of relics, holy water, and salt were among the remedies. Thus Jean Wier had prepared a period of transition to which the singularities of this semi-religious, semi-lay therapy bear witness.[1]

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[1] Horstius, born at Torga (Germany) in 1478, died in 1536.

In the first years of the seventeenth century, a Jesuit father, Frederick of Spee, took up, in his turn, the defence of the sorcerers and demoniacs. Father Spee, born at Kaiserwerth in 1591, entered on his novitiate in 1610. He taught grammar, the humanities, rhetoric, philosophy and theology at Paderborn, Cologne, and Trèves, about 1629, but it was especially during his missionary activities that he had opportunity to observe cases of sorcery (Library of the works of members of the Society of Jesus, by the Reverend Fathers de Baeker and Sommer-Vogel, Vol. VII).

Frederick of Spee acted like a good missionary, conscious of his traditional rôle. But he was gifted with rare intellectual and moral qualities, such as make for freedom of thought in the true sense of the word. Nor was he lukewarm ; he vigorously attacked the heretics, who considered him a dangerous opponent and sought to put him out of the way.

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[1] Laignel-Lavastine & Jean Vinchon, *Jean Schenck et l'histoire de la psychiatrie au XVI.e siècle* (Paris médical, May 1923).

His courage has been little understood by the majority of writers who have dealt with sorcery. Michelet makes but a passing allusion, without quoting him. Calmeil makes no mention of his capacity as a priest, and contents himself with setting his name at the end of those who, in the seventeenth century, fought with perseverance for the cause of humanity.

These champions of the most compromised of causes were at that time called, in derision, the Devil's advocates, or witch-protectors. Also the *advertissements* or *cautio criminalis*[1] were secretly current for a long time without the name of any author, first in manuscript, then, from 1631, as a printed volume. Before Spee, Father Busee, Father Roberti, and, above all, Father Adam Tanner (1572–1632)[2] had already prepared the way.

Frederick of Spee was not a doctor, but he certainly drew inspiration from the work of his contemporaries and compatriots, the doctors of the Rhine valley.

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[1] *Cautio criminalis seu de processibus contra sagas liber, traduit par le médecin* Boudot de Besançon (Lyons, Prost, 1660).

[2] A Tannerus. *Tractatus theologicus de processu adversus crimina excepta, ac præcipue adversus crimen veneficii*, published at the end of treatise on the same subject by the Rev. Father Rafael della Toree (Cologne, 1629.)

A new demonology had appeared eight years before his book, under the signature of Don Francisco Torreblanca, which expounded the doctrine of his opponents.[1] These two men, now entering the lists against one another, were equally erudite, learned in civil and canon law, and exact logicians. But whilst Torreblanca dealt especially with doctrine, his adversary confined himself to observation and to facts.

Frederick of Spee begins by affirming the existence of witches, in spite of the doubts of certain good Catholics of his time who followed the ancient view of the Church. But one sentence shows his real mental attitude. " All the more, that we ourselves, having to do with such people in the prisons and having examined them often and carefully (not to say curiously), I have sometimes found my mind so perplexed that I did not know at all what to think."

Although the crime of witchcraft is an exceptional crime, exceptional procedure, contrary to reason and to the rules of law, spreads the evil instead of arresting it.

Trials by water, marks, torture, do not afford proofs which render impossible the condemnation of innocent people. The judge must show at once character, honesty, and subtlety, for this is what takes place daily: individuals of every rank, whether from interest or from passion, set in motion the judicial machinery, be they prelates or theologians, retired from the world and never having informed themselves of these matters directly; or lawyers, drawing their fees from the trials, or a slandering and venomous populace, or wizards desirous of seeking cover. Cornelius Agrippa, who preceded Spee by fifty years, had stigmatised in almost the same terms the promoters of trials.

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[1] Don F. Torreblanca. *Dæmonologia sive de magia naturali dæmoniaca,* etc. (Mayence, 1623.)

In the trials for witchcraft, Father Spee advises that the opinions of doctors and theologians should be consulted. The accused should be assisted by counsel and by a confessor, chosen by himself if possible.

Torture is criticised in the *cautio criminalis*, by the help of arguments drawn from law and reason. The sin of malevolent taciturnity, a frequent cause of a renewal of the torture, is explained by natural causes.

> Doctors assure us that it can happen in the way of Nature that a man, in the grip of terrible pain, may become insensible to such a degree that he appears seized by a deep sleep or altogether lifeless.

The mere fear of torture may produce these effects, which are recognised to-day as those of physical or mental shock. Shock, in a predisposed subject, can produce every degree of stupor.

A natural explanation shows also why the marks do not bleed under the needle of the torturer.

> Terror, or any similar shock, is capable of so stopping the blood and freezing it, as we say, in the veins, that not one drop escapes from the cut made by a knife.

This scientific argument reduced to nothingness two of the principal proofs of the intervention of the Devil, viz., the display of taciturnity, and the mark.

Father Spee counselled prudence and discretion to the confessors of witches.

The confessor must first urge his penitent to contrition and the judges to charity. The wiles of the examining magistrate must be eschewed by him, and still more so threats, as of the final penalty. The secrecy of the confessional must remain absolute.

Care must be taken to note that some confess themselves guilty " out of simplicity, mental disturbance, or other similar reasons." The auto-accusations of the weak-minded and those suffering from delusional anxiety have been studied by medico-legal experts, such as Professor Dupré ; they had been observed by Frederick of Spee. Similarly he had mentioned false accusations due to " untruths or illusions " ; children especially, surrounded and influenced by suggestion, thus sent to the stake persons whom they declared they had met at the Sabbath.

Father Spee's book closes with a commentary on a page from Tacitus, relating the persecutions of the Christians under Nero. Some among them, under torture, had declared their complicity in the burning of Rome, proof enough that anything can be got out of accused persons by means of torture.

This disciplined and well-arranged book seems to its rare readers of to-day, not only a good manual of special law, but also an excellent work on legal medicine. It treats of the wizard and his mental and physical state during the trial, while throughout remaining submissive to the Church. His faith remained complete in all that the Scriptures taught about the Devil, but Spee could not allow that Satan exercised in his own day so general an activity. His book, which summed up the experience of Adam Tanner and other fathers of the mission, provided an excellent example to all.

It certainly seems as if the incubus-delusion and lycanthropy were the first demoniacal states to be considered as illnesses, as melancholic delusions. Medical books of the period describe, along with lycanthropy, the symptoms and the therapy of the incubus-delusion.

The compiler, Simon Goulard, who reflects in his choice of tales the public opinion of the first years of the seventeenth century,[1] drags in pell-mell happenings interpreted sometimes as the result of illness, at others as supernatural. The relatives and servants who look after melancholics often consider them bewitched. They therefore make use of magic and of exorcisms to lift the spells. Then the malady becomes patent, and the doctor has to be called in. The lycanthropes are no better treated in many places where superstition preserves its hold. Boguet (*Discours exécrable des sorciers*, Rouen, 1606, chap. xlvii), Bodin, only saw in lycanthropy one of the machinations of the wizards. It was necessary for the lycanthrope to be taken before skilled doctors for the illness to be recognised. In the midst of these uncertainties, Goulard, who sought but the picturesque, refused to take sides. "But we will leave discussion to him who cares to inquire into it."

The same uncertainty rules in the minds of the doctors, who have not decided to take sides. Some are held back by their position and official prejudice : others drive science and occultism in double harness.

Among these there is Jeremy Cardan, who doubts at one moment the existence of spirits, with his Aristotelian masters, and then, two pages further on, relates that his father, Facius Cardan, kept a familiar spirit as servant for thirty years. A woman recovers from a strange disease. Cardan perceives in this recovery the influence either of a spirit, or of imagination, or of reassurance. He condemns sorcerers who " rely upon the help of spirits," then invokes them in his turn, attempts to communicate with the dead, appeals to Plato, then to Psellos, and to the Byzantine demonologists, believes in *incubi* and *succubi* and gives secret recipes for incantations.[1] Cardan, thirsting for the marvellous and passionately devoted to hellenism, really desires to relate the platonic demons to the Christian religion. But he still has his head stuffed with the demons of the Middle Ages ; he can hardly collect himself in the midst of so many entities, such was the turmoil into which he was cast by the aspirations of the Renaissance for a renewal of life through a return to Antiquity.

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[1] Simon Goulard, *Thresor d'Histoires admirables de notre temps*. 2 vols. (Geneva, Crespin, MDCXX.), Vol. I, p. 324, 464.

The demons of Fernel and of Ambrose Paré conform better to the official demonology. Fernel, who has elsewhere well-described epilepsy, mania, hypochondria, and melancholia, and has classed the incubus-delusion among mental disturbances,[2] believes that the wizards can attract demons into the bodies of the bewitched where they occasion madness which resembles mania. This type of maniac may be distinguished from others by the power of divination, and by frenetic crises when he hears the name of God.

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[1] *Hieronymi Cardani de Rerum varietate* (Bâle 1571), p. 1063.

[2] Ferneli, *Universa medicina* (Frankfurt, MDCXIII.), p. 523 *et seq.*

Ambrose Paré[1] studies demons and wizards under the heading of monsters. The Devil makes use of men's imagination, above all when they have given themselves up to him. They are then convinced of the reality of their visions, of their auditory hallucinations and of the acts committed under his influence. The proofs of the power of Satan are drawn from the authority of the Fathers of the Church and from the laws on witchcraft. These are the official proofs—Ambrose Paré accepts them without criticism.

Like Fernel, after having treated the incubus as an illusion, Ambrose Paré comes to the casting of spells by wizards. The Devil selects his public and applies himself particularly to "deceiving and stupefying the vulgar herd which gives an easy credence to conjuring tricks and deceits." One may recognise a possessed person, in that he has his tongue hanging out of his mouth, while his voice comes out of his belly or natural parts, pronouncing words in languages unknown to the patient. The possessed "lay bare the secrets of those present, cursing them and reviling them so that they would be worse than insensible clods if they did not feel this, but on the instant when one speaks of the Scriptures, they are terrified, tremble, and are much disturbed."

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[1] *Les œuvres d'Ambroise Paré* (Lyons, Philippe Borde, MDCXII), p. 670 *et seq.*, chap. xxv.

Possession also simulates the crises of hysteria or of epilepsy.

Wizards can evoke illusions which are swiftly rectified by the man in full possession of his reason. But, like Satan their master, they are without power over the external world. Thus it is by illusion that the so-called miracles must be explained.

> They cause earthquakes, thunder, lightning, and storms of wind ; uproot and tear out trees, however big and strong ; they cause a mountain to move from one place to another, lift up a castle into the air and replace it ; fascinate the eyes and dazzle them to such a point that they often make them see what does not exist, which I have seen done by a sorcerer in the presence of the late King Charles IX and other great lords.

These quotations will give a fairly accurate idea of the attitude of the doctors of the sixteenth century toward the demoniacal phenomena. Many accept the official demonological doctrines : visionaries, like Cardan or Paracelsus, replace them by others. Timid descriptions begin to appear in medical books. At this period a Jean

Wier is, indeed, an exceptional spirit : his place in history is forthwith secured by the new freedom of his views. But it will be many years yet before these are accepted. Next to this physician to the Duke of Clèves, a Jesuit father, Frederick of Spee, wrote, while still professing the faith of the Church, the sincerest and weightiest book against the errors of the inquisitors.

These forerunners of the modern spirit were to remain long in the vanguard before they were followed by the rest of the herd. But, little by little, their work obtained more and more confirmation, while, at the same time, the great demoniac epidemics, which had overwhelmed whole countries at a time, were steadily disappearing.

CHAPTER III

DEMONIACS AND CONVULSIONARIES

RELIGIOUS DIAGNOSES

The doctrines of the demonologists, in spite of some opposition, continued to inspire the conduct of priests, magistrates, and certain doctors during the seventeenth century. In the eighteenth century, criticisms of these doctrines appear openly in books which are no longer anonymous, no longer printed in Germany or the Netherlands, but are now sheltered beneath the approbation of some ecclesiastical dignitary and the King's sanction.

These criticisms refuse to admit the absolute power of the Demons over the elements ; it is no longer believed that they are masters able to change, as may seem good to them, the arrangement of times and seasons, to stir up tempests, earthquakes, floods, and fires, to destroy the fruits of the earth, to cause the death of men and beasts. God alone can dispose of such powers. Religion and reason are alike outraged by the affirmation of the contrary thesis.

Jamblique had suggested that the Devil worked chiefly by creating illusions and false images, which deceived men and caused them to believe in chimerical powers. Wier and Ambrose Paré, the latter only to a certain extent, had revived this idea. The Devil could not become a thaumaturge except with the permission of God, " for reasons which are found very rarely in the ordering of His providence."

In order that a case of possession should be accounted truly demoniacal, it was necessary that it should present one or more of the characteristics which the Fathers of the Church have detailed for these cases.

M. de Saint André, Consulting Physician in Ordinary to the King, set down, according to the ritual of exorcism of his day, those signs without which there can be no possession.[1] With him we leave the territory of hypotheses to advance upon that of certitude, for the events mentioned certainly belong to the category of the supernatural. They cannot be reproduced either by artifice or by nature ; these signs are as follows :

I. The raising into the air of people obsessed or possessed, where they remained suspended for a considerable time without the assistance of any artifice.

II. The different languages which they speak without having learnt them or heard them spoken, and the correct replies which they make in each language to whatever questions are put to them.

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[1] Saint André, *Lettres au sujet de la Magie, des Maléfices et des Sorciers* (Paris, de Mauduy, 1725, avec approbation et privilège).

III. The positive information which they give as to what is taking place in the most distant countries, wherein chance plays no part.

IV. The disclosures which they make of the most secret things, of which they cannot have knowledge by other means.

V. The same in regard to the most secret thoughts and feelings, which cannot be disclosed by any external sign.

If none of these signs is found doubt is permissible, particularly when the obsession remains external, and when the will-power of the subject is not replaced by that of the Devil. In that case, it is a case of an aberration of the imagination, or of simulation.

Whenever he could, the consulting physician to the King went to see the alleged possessed persons, accompanied by informed ecclesiastics, and there attempted to arrive at the truth. The thing was not always easy. Devotees, and often the confessor too, clung to the idea of the intervention of the Devil, and would not be undeceived, for instance, until a purge had revealed the trickery, in one case, of a woman who declared that she had been without food for a long time. Another time the Devil, who so greatly fears the approach of objects used in divine service, did not recognise the ritual of exorcisms that Saint André showed him.

The *Lettres sur la Magie*, approved and corrected by Monsieur Le Moine, doctor at the Sorbonne and canon of Saint-Benoît, based themselves upon the authority of the Church. The author declared himself prepared to revise any error. They were, none the less, attacked by Boissier[1] and Dangis[2] a few years after their appearance. These two authors thought that the minds of their century were only too disposed to incredulity. Such a work might draw ill-balanced minds " into a question which is founded on the principles of faith, and which one is obliged to examine thoroughly for the good of Church and State." Dangis begins by demonstrating the reality of magic according to both the Old and the New Testament. The profane authors of Antiquity held the same view. Then he seeks the origin of magic, of wizards, diviners, and fortune-tellers, and of their condemnation by divine and human laws. The works of Lancre and of Bodin are considered as irrefutable proofs. The characteristics of possession and of obsession are those which we know, and among them in especial comes the divination of secret thoughts. A " well disposed " exorcist commands the Devil, in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, to do or to say what is desired by an unbeliever present, so long as he wishes to be convinced for the glory of God and not out of

[1] Paris, Brunet, 1731.

[2] Paris, Prault, 1772.

idle curiosity. This decisive proof, according to Dangis, must be prepared for by fervent prayers.

The *vapours* must not be confused with possession : when the troubles which the former have caused cease, disorders still persist in the organism, whilst the possessed person, after his deliverance, can speak and act with as great a tranquillity of body and mind as if nothing had happened to him. But the Devil can provoke supernatural illnesses exactly similar to natural maladies, in which the characteristics of possession insisted upon in the eighteenth century, but which, be it noted, are missing in several cases of possession in the Gospels, are no longer found. Dangis, who on this point oversteps the instruction of the Church in his day, recognises, however, that, in these cases, the rôle of the doctor is a considerable one.

> The ecclesiastics should consult the doctors in doubtful illnesses before exercising their office, and the doctors should also consult the exorcists when they see unknown illnesses whose symptoms are surprising. *Ubi desinit medicus, ibi incipit exorcista.*

At the same period, the ritual indicated that melancholia and other illnesses had to be eliminated before possession could be established ; the doctor alone was entitled to prescribe remedies.

The dispute between Saint André and Dangis reduces itself, in reality, to very little : they were divided far more by the attitude which they adopted towards the problem than by their arguments. But we may draw from the books of each an important deduction : both now allow the intervention of the doctor. The ritual itself prescribes it, whereas, in preceding centuries, it contained nothing but empirical medical formulæ.

The great epidemics bore henceforth another name than that of demoniac. They are still frequent ; the prophets of the Cevennes, the convulsionaries of St. Médard, the people magnetised by the wand of Mesmer, continue the tradition of the energumens of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Dom Louis Lataste, prior of the White Friars, attempts, in twenty-one theological letters to the writers who defend the convulsions and other pretended miracles of the period,[1] to prove that the miracles of Saint Médard are of diabolic origin, if they are real at all. But the majority of the cures are due only to the powers of the imagination and of the sufferer's belief. The cures, noted in the diary of Carré de Montgeron[2] can almost all be explained by natural processes.

The letters of Dom Louis Lataste mark a fresh advance along the path of progress. The prior of the White Friars often refers to M. Hecquet, who did not believe that the Devil could perform veritable miracles.

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[1] Paris, I, i. Mai 1740.

[2] *La vérité des miracles opérés par l'intercession de Pâris.* Utrecht, 1737.

> It is true that he allows much to nature ; that is an error common enough in men of his profession, but an error which, however great, is not incompatible with science. Who can fail to be impressed also by the zeal which he shows in defending the dignity and the sanctity of religion against the littlenesses and disorders of the convulsionary ?

Now, Philip Hecquet, friend of Port Royal, had separated from the Jansenists on the question of the convulsions before the tomb of the deacon Pâris. His conscience as a doctor, in agreement with his faith as a Christian, had revolted against the means by which the healers pretended to cure the sick. He could not admit that a paralysis disappeared because the patient had been struck with a sharp stake or trampled on. He was scandalised by the scenes in which women, dishevelled, and half naked "in the costumes of convulsionaries," under pious pretexts revived the bacchanalia of classic times.

His three pamphlets met with great success.[1] They expressed exactly the modern opinion of the day, which refused both the divine and the demoniacal interpretation of the famous miracles. Many were, in his opinion, nothing but frauds, in other cures the illnesses were less serious than they were said to be ; in general it was a question of nervous troubles, generally known by the name of *vapours*, which disappear under suggestion.

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[1] Philippe Hecquet, *La cause des convulsions. Le naturalisme des convulsions démontré. Le mélange dans les convulsions confondu par le naturalisme* (Soleure, 1733).

Hecquet has but one remedy in like cases : shut up the people subject to convulsions in a " house kept for the pestilence-ridden, there put them in infirmaries under the care of good doctors." The best remedy would be that which had been used in the hospitals of New France, it was unfailing and specific ; more, it was simple to use, since it consisted solely of cold water taken internally and applied externally. To this could be added : " the whip, to restore to sanity and common sense vaporous erotics and hypochondriacal vapourers."[1]

This energetic therapy shows the clear-sightedness of the author of the *Naturalisme des Convulsions*. In an epidemic, analogous to the great demoniac epidemics of other times, he saw nothing more than disequilibrium, and perversions which needed to be restrained. His opinion was shared, at least in part, by his opponents.

All these controversies, originated by Jean Wier and Frederick of Spee, began to free both religious and lay minds from the tyranny of a superstition which had been shared by all. But this tyranny was still powerful. The encyclopædists themselves dared not strike the final blow at an edifice already crumbling at the base. They made reservations to which we shall return, and which are astonishing when one considers the vigour with which their pupils, the Jacobins, combated fanaticism.

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[1] *Cause des convulsions*, p. 79.

The general public were little affected by the disputes which were of such passionate interest to the intellectual élite ; it was continually necessary to remind the masses that the practice of magic was a grave sin. The manuals of confession, dealing with the First Commandment,[1] warned the faithful to confess themselves of the following sins :

> I have learnt the magic and superstitious arts. I have practised them and taught them. I have sought these same magic arts with eagerness. I have made use of superstitious remedies against fever and other ills. I have put faith in dreams. I have consulted diviners. I have tried to tell fortunes from vain and superstitious appearances. I have owned and have read books of magic and of superstitions. I still have some of these books. I have given some to others. I have sold some. I have composed or printed some.

So deeply rooted a belief is not easily extirpated from the human soul : we find a proof of this in

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[1] R. P. Christophe Leuterbreuver, *La confession coupée,* chap. i. (Sur le premier commandement).

Bayle and in the encyclopædists. Bayle, while still influenced by tradition, had certainly some doubts as to the reality of witchcraft. In his *Réponses aux Questions d'un Provincial*, he speaks of the celebrated Trois Echelles in terms which indicate a belief in sorcery, quoting the story which Bodin gives without criticism.[1] In the article "Grandier," in his historical and critical dictionary,[2] he objects to the opinion of Ménage, who regards the possession of the nuns of Loudun as delusional, denying that Urbain Grandier was a wizard.

> "One would suppose," says Bayle, "that M. Ménage wished to make a general attack on all that is said of magicians ; to do that would be to escape from one difficulty by means of another. It is certain that the most incredulous and the most subtle of philosophers cannot but be perplexed by the phenomena in connection with witchcraft."

Marshal d'Ancre, according to Bayle, really used magic, and in the affair of Loudun two facts militate in favour of the belief in supernatural powers : the conversion of Milord Montague and the possession of Father Surin, the price of a service he had asked of the Demon.

It is not, therefore, astonishing that one of the authors of the Encyclopædia in the article

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[1] Bayle, *Œuvres diverses*, La Haye, 1727, 4 volumes, in-folio, Vol. III., p. 602 *et seq.*

[2] *Amsterdam and Leyden*, 1730, 4 volumes, in-folio.

" Sorcerer " should have reproduced Bayle's doubts. He thinks with the sage, that the truth lies between the opposed views.

> To give credence over-readily to all that is told of this sort and to reject absolutely all that is said about it, are two equally dangerous extremes. To examine and weigh the facts before putting one's trust in them is the mean indicated by reason.

In the article " Sorcery " the Encyclopædists reserve " to the theologians the sole right to handle a matter so delicate." On the other hand, the article " Witchcraft " which precedes the article headed " Sorcerer," ridicules those who believe in witchcraft. The contradictions in these two articles are in the line of Bayle's hesitations.[1]

Supernatural events, or those appearing so, will still, for long, continue to trouble men's imaginations. The encyclopædists opposed the wise man to the shepherd, the cultured to the ignoramus. In reality, both meet on this ground when the deepest instincts of the human soul are stirred.

During the nineteenth century, the Church put the faithful on their guard against all attempts to return to the ancient magic, condemning magnetism and spiritualism in the name of an unchanging doctrine, from 1840 down to our own day. At the present moment she still holds to the same principles. In the occult sciences she perceives the intervention, more or less disguised, of the Demon. If any question of obsession or of possession arise she attempts to guide her pastors prudently in the examination and judgment of the facts.

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[1] See the *Encyclopédie Diderot et d'Alembert*, Paris, 1743, and the letter on magic, which appeared in the ecclesiastical journal in 1775 and was criticised by Delalande in the *Journal des Savants*, May 1775.

This, according to Father Debreyne's book, is how she envisages them.[1] The obsessed feel the persecutions of the Devil in two ways. Either the obsession is external and reveals itself by cuts, violence, and wounds without natural cause, and it may be accompanied by hallucinations, or else the obsession is internal and consists in the enslavement of the soul (Ribet). In this case it is difficult to recognise. First it must be ascertained that the subject offers every guarantee of sincerity and intellectual integrity. Internal obsession may be confused with certain delusions. Erotic illusions are common in the obsessed, alternating with sadness, dread or terror. In the course of the crises of excitement which are the rule with these obsessed patients, there may be revealed traits of temperament usually quite unsuspected.

The word "obsession" implies the idea of a struggle, of a siege (*obsidere*—to besiege). Possession is the capture of the stronghold, the invasion of the soul and of the body by the Devil. His will has replaced that of the possessed person.

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[1] P. Debreyne, op. cit., p. 276 *et seq.*

The characteristics of possession are marvellous. There are to be found all the signs that Saint André insisted upon, with the concurrence of the ecclesiastical authority of his day, upon which natural explanations can throw no light : divination, the use of languages till then unknown to the subject, freedom from physical laws. The possessed person fears the contact of holy objects ; he is proud, insulting and caustic in his speech, even when, before possession, he was modest and reserved.

Possession is protracted and intermittent, reappearing by crises ; it must be distinguished from affections of the mind, and from simulation.

The possessions described in the Scriptures cannot be disputed. It is by no means the same with certain historic cases. With regard to the nuns of Loudun, Debreyne recalls that the exorcist should first advise a stringent moral and physical hygiene. The imagination must be restrained and diverted. This Trappist was mindful that he had once been a doctor, and harmonised his two vocations by teaching that the demon to-day borrows the resources of suggestion, that true possession is exceptional. The rites of exorcism should be applied with prudence and discernment, in private, far from the crowd.

But there is a connection between the state of possession and actual illnesses. Hysteria, says Father Debreyne, develops the " life of feeling "[1] to the point of diminishing consciousness, intelligence, and will-power ; a personality thus weakened facilitates possession. The converse is true : possession may lead to the appearance of hysteria. Here lies the key to demonopathic contagion. Neuropaths multiply around a possessed person. Such was the opinion of Görres, but without the medical arguments of moral theology.

The diagnosis of possession is a very delicate matter. Slight troubles and the peculiarities of the hysterical character are easily referred to neurosis. This first phase of the diagnosis is all the easier to-day, since we have learnt from Dupré and the School of the Depôt much about the imagination and the mythomania of the hysterical subject. These neuropaths are capable of reproducing the symptoms of all kinds of illnesses, thanks to images rich in plastic representations which urge a physical realisation.

The task is more complicated as soon as it becomes a question of crises. Father Debreyne was a contemporary of Charcot. The latter had described the four periods of convulsions, rhythmic movements either of struggle or of rage, passionate attitudes, delirium with hallucinations of animals, fire, or red things. But the crises are no longer ordered with this set of symptoms in our hospitals, since Babinski overthrew that dogmatic system. Of it there remain but a few details derived from observation, and a sort of general scheme of the crisis, from which one of the periods is always missing. The crisis is now a mixture of emotive and imaginative symptoms, the latter playing the principal rôle.

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[1] " La vie sensitive."

Stigmata, anæsthesia of the senses and of cutaneous sensibility, are to-day much disputed ; the partisans of Babinski deny their existence. The hysterogenic zones are undergoing the same fate.

Hysteria is no longer anything more than a group of symptoms due to a suggestion, curable by a stronger suggestion, which is persuasion. But its causes remain obscure. In predisposed subjects it returns during certain attacks of depression. In mystics who have been unable to maintain their will-power intact, and have lost control over their ecstasies, it is not infrequent. The same causes may, at one and the same time, produce hysteria and a more or less morbid mysticism. The fear of the Demon acts in the same way ; its suggestive power is strong among believers, and may make of them possessed persons in the medical sense of the word. If the attempt is made to estimate the religious aspect, in this connection, border-line cases between hysteria and illness must be admitted.

For doctors, obsession has a more restricted meaning than for theologians. The obsessed person is lacking in will-power, like the hysteric. But this impotence favours the development of emotional, at the expense of imaginative, phenomenon.

An obsessed person is arrested in his soarings towards God by mingled anxiety and disgust: simultaneously with the images evoked in prayer, erotic or sacrilegious ideas, torment him and drive him to act in a way precisely contrary to his wishes. Séglas has laid stress on these obsessions by contrasting desires, in direct contradiction to the real individual trends of the subject. A woman thus obsessed will make a vow to become a nun, but at each attempt to enter a convent, she dreams of the world, of feasts and romantic adventures, and thereby suffers from extreme anxiety. At church she is driven to blaspheme, to make unseemly gestures, to grimace before the altar. At the confessional, instead of humbling herself, she has a longing to relate all kinds of things to make herself interesting. Blasphematory manias, which drive the subject to blaspheme, are of this order.

Bleuler has described in certain mental illnesses *ambivalence of feeling.* The patient is tempted to perform an action, and at the same time is prevented from doing so by the horror or terror with which it inspires him.[1] The prohibition is present in consciousness, the temptation remains subconscious. In neurosis the temptation will be expressed in the form of obsessive impulses, which, on becoming conscious, pass into the same category as the prohibition, whence conflict and anxiety ensue. In dreams, that is to say in the subconscious life,[2] contradictory images are closely associated. Often, in the same image, an idea transforms itself instantaneously, and the contrary idea takes its place. Conflict and anxiety may in that case be lacking. This psycho-analytic explanation of obsessive ambivalence gives the key to a great many of the facts noted in demoniacs. It shows us why these facts are always cast in the same mould, and present themselves in the same clinical aspects. But it does not cast any light upon the extrinsic characteristics of these conditions, and it is upon these that the Church insists as confirming their supernatural origin. Since these extrinsic characteristics are lacking in the incubus-delusion, the latter is classified by " moral theology " as among the morbid affections. The descriptions given by the ancients is reverted to. The incubus is a dream in which the patient is suffocated, crushed as if beneath an enormous weight. This weight gives him the impression of a living being lying on his chest, which engenders indescribable anxiety.

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[1] Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo.*

[2] Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams.*

The incubus, when it takes form, shows itself as a horrible demon, or an old woman, or an animal—a monkey, black dog, or huge cat. The weak-minded who have preserved a belief in nurses' tales, and are often tormented by venereal desires, are very specially predisposed to the incubus-delusion. Women are more subject to it than men.

Finally, it must not be forgotten that lascivious women have credited the Devil's account with acts which they desired to conceal.

"Moral theology" does not hesitate to relegate tales of sorcerers and legends of the witches' Sabbath to the class of superstitions. They are for it, "absurdities and turpitudes which dishonour reason and humanity."[1] This is the language of the eighteenth century. The authority of St. Thomas and of St. Augustine has not preserved the incubus and succubus delusions from their fall; their opinions were but the common errors of their day.

Father Debreyne, with the other modern theologians, attributes part of the trouble to illness and part to the Devil. The latter is only present when the organic and psychological symptoms are complemented by extrinsic signs. Possession forms a complete picture. The external manœuvres of Satan culminate in the malady observable in the individual. It matters little that this malady takes on varying forms since these exist only in appearance.

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[1] Debreyne, op. cit., pp. 148, *et seq.*

The mental specialists of to-day class among the demonopathic, states as acute mental disorders, those which are due to manic fits or to melancholic anxiety, to dream-delusions of confusional states: among disorders of slower evolution must be classed delusions of interpretation and of imagination without hallucination, and hallucinatory delusions where the mystic duality intervenes, the eternal conflict between God and the Devil. Many of these delusions are not incurable. Isolation from their surroundings, a well-organised moral and physical therapy, can restore to social life unhappy creatures who had become a danger to themselves and those about them.

Thus the mode of treatment shows clearly the nature of the illness, as says the old precept. It is not permissible to regard as supernatural phenomena which ameliorate merely by dint of the therapy requisite for anxiety, exhaustion, and auto-intoxication.

CHAPTER IV

NEUROSES CHARACTERISED BY DEMONIC FANTASIES

The group of neuroses is artificial, if it is only considered from the medical point of view. In reality, this is a question of the psycho-neuroses which involve the participation of the psychic functions, of intelligence and will. But here, as Janet has pointed out, the particular disturbance of the intelligence, a " kind of strange delusion," cannot be classified with lunacy proper, because it is very transitory and scarcely affects the relationship of the patient with society.

Neuropaths with demonic fantasies are among the most interesting. The study of this type has made possible a clearer definition of the diseases of personality. It has given us the key, if not to all, at least to a very great number, of happenings considered supernatural.

Neuropaths may be divided into two main categories : the anxious and the imaginative. But in many subjects emotional perturbation must not be considered as hostile to imaginative exaltation. We now know enough about these matters to conjecture that they may be found associated in one clinical picture, hardly to be put into a separate class as an isolated neurosis, but often found in mystics and possessed persons.

The anxiety-neurosis shows itself, in some cases, in its pure state. The isolated, morbid emotion, only affects the intelligence in the form of a transitory dread. Unreasoning "fears" follow at night, shortly after falling asleep or at early dawn, towards three o'clock in the morning. At other times they take possession of the sufferer on awaking or after awakening. These are the hours when the sympathetic centres of anxiety are the most excitable.

In some cases, fears and nightmares, disturbing the imagination, bring to birth visions of an incubus-demon. To anxiety is joined the illusion of a presence, which the semi-consciousness of a rapid awakening does not succeed in driving away. The two following examples show clearly the transition from the emotion to the imaginative image.

Suzanne is a young girl of sixteen, waitress in a café. For eighteen months she has suffered from a severe *malaise*, which comes upon her regularly towards midnight. She falls asleep without difficulty, but when the attack comes she sits up suddenly in bed, utters terrifying cries, and feels as if she were being suffocated under her bedclothes. There is a weight on her chest, she feels as if she cannot exhale the air she breathes in. The attacks, growing more and more violent, return regularly every night, but are never repeated during the day. Menstruation is irregular ; this is the only organic disturbance that we can discover in the history of the girl. We learn, on inquiry into her heredity, that her mother is emotional and sensitive. The attacks always occur under the same conditions. Suzanne's occupation forces her to eat very quickly, in between serving customers. She is made a little uncomfortable, at the beginning of the digestive process, by a pocket of air, which a medical investigation reveals in the upper part of the stomach ; she is an air-swallower, an aerophage. The signs of excitation of the bulbar centres, associated in anxiety states, are all present. The pilomotor reflex produces local and general horripilation on the slightest excitation. During sleep this marked tendency to anxiety increases, as is usual, little by little, and precipitates the attack at the end of about an hour. During the attack, Suzanne is terrified ; it appears to her that some force from above is about to crush in her chest. The treatment, which calmed the sufferer fairly rapidly, confirmed our hypothesis.

In this first case, there is only some nameless and shapeless force. Andrée, our second case, gives it a name and a definite appearance. This young woman, suddenly widowed, lives in a little old provincial town, mixing little in society and taking refuge in romantic reading. She falls asleep and, like Suzanne, wakes an hour after, but her feelings are more complex. She is at once distressed and yet steeped in a strange voluptuousness. She shivers at the approach of a masculine presence, which she interprets as that of her dead husband ; soon two lips are placed on hers. She remains some time in a disordered state, then tears herself from the dream and regains consciousness, but cannot get to sleep again without the help of hypnotics. Her nights, at certain times when women are most sensitive, become an uninterrupted sequence of nightmares, steadily more frightful towards the approach of morning, but without link with the dream at the beginning. The patient is very tired during the day, her health suffers. The same disturbances of the nervous system already observed in Suzanne, are noted in Andrée, with the exception of the aerophagy. The same general treatment is applied. The sensations in the early part of the night appear at longer intervals, then disappear ; the nightmares become rarer, and the state of the patient returns to the normal after a few months of treatment.

The sensation, purely distressing in Suzanne, distressing and voluptuous together in Andrée, constitutes the emotional basis upon which the incubus-delusion evolves. The first, in her simplicity and her ignorance of occultism, notes only the presence of some force outside herself. The second finds again her husband so lately dead. But neither the one nor the other are great imaginatives ; they do not give rein to their faculties to embroider on the initial theme. In the daytime, their heads cleared, they realise that they are ill, and they come spontaneously to see the doctor. From that day, one might say, their recovery had begun.

The cases which follow are less elementary. In them there is no question of the incubus-delusion, but of daily anxiety states coming upon them in the form of crystallised obsessions : in the form of fixed associations, compounded of an intellectual and an affective element, made possible by a deficiency of will-power.

Jeanne, a piano teacher aged forty-two, consults us about troubles which upset her profoundly. It is a question of ambivalent obsessions :[1] one image immediately unlooses its opposite. Her anxiety is much augmented in the course of her struggle to drive away the second image. The initial image is a vision or a representation of the martyrdom of a saint, or of the way of the Cross ; the second image is erotic in proportion to the cruelty of the first. This sincere Christian suffers terribly : she has to leave the church ; she defiles it, she says, by her presence. Outside the church the recollection of the second picture still obsesses her like a painful memory. As far back as she can remember, in the earliest years of childhood, this unhappy woman was aware of the poignant drama ; it became more terrible at the time of her first communion and then during puberty. At the age of twelve she had the impression of a force from without acting upon her, of an irresistible whirlwind that overwhelmed her. This force was the Demon.

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[1] **Séglas, *Leçons cliniques* (Paris, Asselin et Houzeau, 1895), p. 127.**

Unlike the classic cases of possessed persons, Jeanne is not afflicted with doubt or ambivalence ; in her daily life she acts with energy and decision, there is indecision only during religious ceremonies.

We analyse the attack from the organic point of view. Jeanne feels, before the coming of the obsessive apparitions, certain sharp pains in the heart and epigastrium, which last throughout the attack. An examination of the sympathetic system, at a time when these crises are frequent, reveals excitation of the pneumogastric nerve-centres and of the whole sympathetic system. As the obsession never culminates in a positive act, which would here be erotic, the patient never feels the momentary satisfaction which follows the accomplishment of the action in the classic cases of obsession.

Jeanne is very religious, but her religion is maintained on orthodox lines by her confessor. She believes in the Devil, but assents when we declare that this is a clearly defined illness. If for a moment she believed herself possessed, it was due to the impression of some force outside herself, which accompanied her anxiety states, an impression which we know can exist quite apart from any idea of the supernatural.

Prognosis is grave in ambivalent obsessions and cure difficult. Sometimes, instead of simply causing nervous fatigue, they pave the way for dissociation of the personality, as in the case of the priest, of whom we shall now say a few words.

The Abbé G—— was the vicar of a certain parish in a large town. He is a cultured man, well versed in secular and religious literature. Tormented with indecision and troubled with scruples, he accompanies every act of his life with weird rites. For instance, he cannot pass by a hole in the road without walking round it a certain number of times, always the same number. Going down the street or walking upstairs, he indulges in other tricks, without being able to explain why. After several years in this state the obsessions invaded his religious life, where they took the form of ambivalent obsessions. The Devil, especially during Mass, tried to force on him erotic images as soon as he began to pray with fervour, to prevent him from finding the words of the ritual, and, above all, of the Consecration. A terrible struggle began. Every word of the "*Hoc est enim Corpus meum*" was pronounced with violence. The Consecration ended, the unhappy priest sank down on the altar, overcome by fatigue. The scandal became notorious. The Abbé G—— had received an order to say his Mass in a private chapel by himself. The disturbances continuing, he was sent to an asylum, where, for a year, he sought relief by leading a tranquil life and by reading, abstaining, by order of his superiors, from all religious practices. At the end of this time he became wholly a prey to delusions, torn without respite between divine and diabolical influences, which translated themselves into hallucinations and loss of control of his actions, which he believed governed by a will foreign to his own.

This group of patients, from Suzanne to Abbé G——, is composed of subjects in whom emotional phenomena predominate. In the following case we penetrate into the domain of imagination. In the place of fixed obsessions, of unchanging form, we note now an abundance of shifting and variable disturbances, appearing as a result of one suggestion, disappearing at another. It is permissible, for the first time, to speak of hysteria according to Babinski's conception, but demonomanias may exist apart from it, and in a great number of cases. It must also be added that hysteria, in women like the patient described below, may be episodic, and revolve above a foundation which we often find in mystics as well as in demoniacs, composed of emotional and imaginative tendencies and of cyclic disturbances of the temperament.

Louise is forty-two. She is the wife of a petty functionary, constrained by his office to live in a remote corner of Berry where sorcerers are still in fashion, and attract to their consultations peasants and townsfolk. In the neighbourhood there would still be several bewitched persons. Into these surroundings, there comes a woman who is religious, but whom this atmosphere draws, in spite of herself, beyond the bounds of orthodoxy. Louise has suffered from frequent digestive and respiratory troubles, which have often called for the intervention of the doctors. She always complains of pains, indefinitely localised in the abdomen. Much medical advice has not helped it. On these organic disturbances she has superimposed hypochondriacal interpretations—the fear of cancer, of tuberculosis, this last partly justified.

Her sister, who believed herself possessed, went to see a wizard healer, who brought her relief. Louise's state, on the contrary, worsened after her visit to this thaumaturge. His treatment consisted in applications of branches of thyme to the chest, in magnetic passes, in incantations against spells, followed by the immersion of the cut hair of the patient in holy water, hair and water being then thrown at the foot of a cross, the sufferer, at the same time, repeating prayers for her recovery. In the meanwhile, the wizard, taking advantage of her credulity, would appear to have seduced her ; after this assault the symptoms began to aggravate. The patient was convinced of being under a spell at the moment when she first presented herself.

These were effects of the spell, facts partly real, interpreted as evidence of witchcraft : the impression of a pocket of water, of a child's head in her stomach : sharp pains in the heart, nightmares during sleep, shivering fits and perspiration in the morning on waking ; sexual frigidity since an accouchement : fever between 100.4 and 101.3 F. for a fortnight[1] (she still had symptoms of congestion of the lungs) ; finally, bizarre, inexplicable *malaise* ; several people dwelt in her body, the wizard, the Devil, and various supernumeraries : she was an automaton in their hands, although well aware of what she was doing. Visions and internal voices lacked, but sorcerers and Demons spoke through her mouth, made her perform acrobatic tricks, turned her upside down (as in the old descriptions of the witches' Sabbath), made her tremble. She tried to cure herself of this supernatural illness with the help of a female healer, but she could only calm her troubles when she was actually present. They reappeared as soon as she left her.

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[1] Centigrade : 38 and 38.5.

The *malaise* and the possession return by crises, between which the sufferer is more or less tranquil, but retains her conviction of persecution by the Devil. During the attacks, the patient is much agitated and carries out movements which the teller and spell-remover has taught her " to untie the attachments put upon her limbs." She is filled with great agitation, jumps on her chair and whirls her arms round and round ; but these movements, instead of producing the desired effect, bring back the possession. She speaks with diverse intonations : the shrill voice of Punch or a loud melodramatic voice, and speaks of herself in the third person, as if she were a stranger to what she herself says.

The voices are ironical or menacing, often gross : they speak to her husband, to her child, "Look at that idiot. I'll kill that little brat." Louise strikes attitudes, walks like an automaton. At the end of the attack, her face is suffused and she weeps profusely. Her husband shares her ideas.

We have been present at a certain number of her attacks. She has also had several in the presence of a priest, of whom she had asked help. At home, they take place when her husband is near her. The pulse, at first rapid, becomes progressively slower. The attack begins by a sense of the distension of the stomach, often following a brief spasm of pain. Anxiety, and a need of enervation, alternate or mingle, but it is the painful distension of the stomach which warns Louise of the approach of the Devil or the sorcerer before they possess her. The female healer, when these premonitory symptoms appeared, kicked her and thus provoked a second crisis, short and sharp, which drove out the Devil. Louise was calmed, and felt nothing more. Here is the shorthand report of the Devil's remarks during one of the scenes, which we witnessed.

"*She is not there, she cannot answer you.*

"*I am thinking of leaving her, but in order to go into her child. I will do what I choose with that child!*

"*I am called the Horned Devil. I do not need to tell you any more. I will tell you nothing.*

"*I go to Mass every Sunday with her, but I do not like the holy water.*

"*I could have given her everything ; she did not want me to. She is hard-headed, Louise. I have promised her I will make her shed tears of blood* (*a recollection of the threats of menaces of the sorcerer, who wanted to have his will with her*).

"*I hate priests and doctors.*"

After the attack, Louise, exhausted, bathed in perspiration, weeps frequently ; if she is much depressed, she talks of suicide.

As the attacks become frequent, a drastic method is employed : one pole of a faradic apparatus is applied to the nape of her neck, the other to the epigastric cavity. After a few minutes' passage of the current, Louise's guests leave her, one after another, first the sorcerer, then the alleged accomplices, then the Devil himself. A second electrical treatment definitely drives out the spirits, and restores the woman's confidence : she feels gay, for the first time for fifteen years.

The attacks disappear, the general condition improves, but there remains a patch of eczema on the neck : "that is where the Devil seized me," she says. The physical and mental disturbances persist, in a weaker form.

Louise still believes herself condemned to die of tuberculosis, although the state of her lungs has improved : perhaps she will have a cancer, or be disfigured. Her husband or her son, at present in good health, are threatened. She makes scenes with her husband, which she immediately regrets. Certain symptoms disappear after a visit to the doctor, without any further treatment. Louise and her husband are convinced that the doctor has the gift of removing spells.

Here is a woman, who has become frigid after an accouchement, and who has always suffered from digestive disturbance ; who is, further, tuberculous. She goes to see a healer ; he abuses her trust. The moral shock to this sensitive nature, ready to believe in the supernatural because of her milieu, depressed by illness, precedes the first attack of possession. Another healer, by a clumsy suggestion, augments the attacks while attempting to cure them. Persuasion, aided by electro-therapy, causes the attacks to disappear ; but the mental depression remains, maintained by the physical disorders ; it is undoubtedly a case of hysteria helped by this last factor. Imagination and emotion unite to create the symptoms, and also to make them disappear. The hysteria appears episodically, but suggestion does not influence the soil which produced it, nor does it act any better upon the belief in the Devil, the least morbid element in this history. Louise has reproduced the picture of mediæval possession, by the suggestions of the sorcerer-healers surrounding her. Thus did the demoniacs of former times, according to the interrogatories of the judges themselves, inspired by the *Malleus Maleficarum*.

Angèle, another demoniac, became so in spiritualist surroundings. The customers of this little dressmaker, thirty-eight years old, were for long unaware of her mysterious life, up to the day when she left her business to give herself up entirely to her taste for the supernatural. Angèle took refuge in a dream-world while her husband was still alive : he treated her harshly, and made her unhappy. Yet she loved him, and her love drove her to follow him to the spiritualist séances which he attended assiduously. He dies, and here is Angèle suddenly left to herself, and asking the question which follows the deep griefs of widowhood. Where is he ? What has become of him ? She inquires of God Himself, in the course of long meditations, finds a little peace, but soon becomes anxious. She no longer eats, becomes exhausted. Serious disturbances follow one another. The digestive apparatus is the first to give way, then menstruation ceases. Delusional obsessions break out in the night with terrifying visions : an eagle alights on her shoulders and holds her quivering in his talons : beasts prowl, black shapes or red, suddenly perceived, as suddenly vanished. Odd scraps of phrases are heard : confused but menacing murmurs. She realises that her husband is the author of these visions which remind her of his old unkindness. Another night it is a little Devil, whom she divines without seeing him : he is luminous, and she perceives his shine behind the nape of her neck, at the place where the eagle was. By day she is downcast and terrified, but she still goes on working, with more and more difficulty. Her mind works unceasingly on these disquieting manifestations. She asks the advice of priests and doctors, more or less follows their advice, and at this point encounters one of her husband's spiritualist co-religionaries.

After this meeting the visions change. The spirit informs Angèle that she has become a medium. Automatic writing, trances, visions, all the mediumistic states appear at his suggestion. She goes into a trance as soon as she enters our consulting-room. The trance begins by shivering fits. Then she " goes to sleep " ; that is to say, closes her eyes while continuing to perceive what is around her. She slips from the armchair and falls to the ground, where she lies stretched out. White phantoms appear to her, followed by black shapes. The spirit having told her of an approaching consolation, saints and spirits mingle in new pictures, which vary at each sitting. Her physical condition remains poor : she speaks slowly and painfully. Here is the shorthand report of one of Angèle's " trances."

I see that white shape again. The Eiffel Tower in four pieces, it is a coming disaster. It is Paris which is going to be destroyed. No, Paris will not be destroyed ; it is a bad prediction. It was a Hindu who said that. What stupidity ! If we trust the treaty signed by Germany, in 1930–31 we shall have more trouble with them. They are manufacturing very dangerous scented gases. They need so few men to do what they want. After a violent earthquake America will give us some concessions : otherwise we shall be in a fine pickle.

After a silence, Angèle broaches a less general subject.

I was just on the level of the earth : for very serious things one must go higher. There is a space between the earth and the place where I have to climb. It is so cold up there [shivers]. This charge is worse than an invasion of evil spirits ! I see them ; there is no way of escaping them once one is caught by them. How they hurt me ! I turn, I turn around the globe. They are hurting me terribly. I am held everywhere, down to the tip of my toes. There is no way of crossing this space. At other times I manage it more easily. They are pulling at my feet. I should not like to be in the skin of Madame G—— [whom she accuses of witchcraft, and of whom she is jealous]. It is she who begins. She is suffering. She knows what she is going to take. She is looking for my husband. She is going to make him come down. If there is really anyone who can pull me out of this, let him do it. Here is a planet. My husband : there is something with him that is hot, or is it that he is in hell? Madame G—— is like me at this moment, she is trembling [shivers]. I am stifling, take away what I have on me. I am surrounded by immaterial beings. It was all red. Now I see the white again. I am again on a bridge, with the Seine underneath. It was a joke, that dream! I return to the Rue du Bac. I have a little soul praying around me. I feel her, she is sweet, full of devotion, it is the certainty of a cure. It will get better and better until a complete cure. I have three things in me: the suggestion of my husband, the spell cast by Madame G——, and mediumistic power which seeks to appear. All this falls around me. The spell is going to disappear. The suggestion of my husband is there. Mephistopheles is not far off. But the white spirit is fighting. Why did St. Joseph say that I was too wise? It was my soul which was sick. How you hurt me!

This last remark is explained by a confession of Angèle's during the attack itself: when she saw herself attacked by the Demon on the death of her husband, she was terrified, and wished for the day to bring her peace. Now she no longer desires to "wake up," and complains if one tries to draw her from her dream. She wishes to fight against the suggestion of her husband and against the spell, she does not want to struggle against her "mediumism."

This is very serious: it brings on, little by little, the dissociation of her personality; she dreams all day while going about her occupations. She no longer works, becomes unable to follow other people's conversation, and, without the neighbour who looks after her, would remain indifferent to everything, like the fakir in the hollow of his tree. Thus she cannot doubt the reality of the phenomena in which she believes herself to be taking part. Insanity is near, in the form of schizophrenia, or of mania characterised by fission. The story of Angèle is unhappily that of many unfortunate people who have thought to find consolation in spiritualism. They pass, under the influence of diverse suggestions, through periods whose symptoms are momentarily those of hysteria, before arriving at the loss of the conscious personality. They appear, on account of their behaviour in society, as if they were on the border-line between neurosis and madness.

Sometimes simulation comes in to complicate the picture, when the dream or desired manifestation is not spontaneously produced ; if those present have still to be convinced of the reality of the phenomena or if any interest is at stake, they begin deliberately to play a part which has been, till then, automatic and involuntary. Many mediums do not differ from the possessed in this respect.

A few of the latter go so far as to simulate the diverse manifestations of the Devil and to manufacture false marks of his having appeared to them. Put at their ease, and plied with questions, they end by confessing, but with this reservation : that they were not then masters of their own movements, that the Demon had imposed these actions upon them. In relatively sincere subjects, simulation, like hysteria, is only episodic. It bears witness to the ardour of a conviction which others cannot be induced to share and it accordingly attempts to heap up proofs.

Such subjects, sufficiently conscious to direct their every-day life fairly well, are usually the sowers of the epidemics of satanism. They rarely make proselytes of set purpose ; rather do they contribute to the creation of a disturbing atmosphere, calculated to strike the imagination of those about them. Fear, mingled with curiosity concerning the marvellous, begins to excite those present. If one of these is more or less predisposed by a previous exaltation of the imagination, he will share the effects of the possession, but less deeply than the subject himself ; we shall see an instance of this later. Self-interest is again one way by which the infection spreads ; a possessed person, by attracting the public, makes something out of it almost in spite of himself. Charitable souls succour him, help his family, insist on bearing their share of the merit there is in driving out the Demon. Unless he is very experienced, his confessor will uphold him with all his authority. Parties will be formed, some declaring there is diabolic intervention, others criticising it. To avoid these outbreaks and these quarrels, breeding-ground of the suggestions which are the real witchcrafts, the Church of to-day has proscribed public exorcism. Further to avoid suggestion she entrusts this task only to wise and skilled priests. And for the same reason she forbids recourse to fortune-tellers, sorcerers, and healers.

In the patients whom we have just described, and in those in the following chapter, there is no question of extrinsic signs, of miraculous happenings, such as divination, the gift of tongues, and levitation, or suspension above the ground. It might be objected that we, who have never encountered these happenings, have only seen the sick, and not the veritably possessed. We accept this reproach. If one day we are present at any miraculous occurrences we will take up the matter again, from another point of view.

CHAPTER V

DEMONIACAL MADNESS

Observation of the demoniacal neuroses has provided us with a certain number of ideas which enable us better to understand phenomena long mysterious.

The simplest cases are not the least interesting. They furnish the key to that feeling of the presence of some entity which is produced under the influence of day-dreams or in the dream-haunted unconsciousness of sleep, in which a sudden emotion shakes the subject, and, all of a sudden, he has the illusion of a materialisation of the object which ordinarily haunts his imagination : of her dead husband, in a woman lately widowed ; of an incubus-Demon, in a sensual mystic. If an imaginative disposition is lacking, the illusion is only that of some nameless force, born of a physical distress. This is the elementary form of this phenomenon, the most complete form being the incubus.

Ambivalent associations, unimportant in dreams, but obsessive and giving rise to anxiety states when consciousness is awake, naturally place the Devil in opposition to God, evil to good. They signalise that conflict of the instincts which only arises when these instincts are violent. Feeble instincts do not provide the occasion for this sort of struggle, whilst naturally, the instinct of self-preservation and the instinct of conservation of the race give rise to it, as well as the group of instincts and affective states which culminate in religious feeling. A mother who adores her child is obsessed by the idea of killing it ; a man who fears death, by the idea of suicide ; a pious woman is arrested, in her soarings towards God, by impious visions. Thus it seems as if two personalities dwell together in the one human being, one wishing to follow the most natural tendencies, the other preventing them.

The third idea—of the doubling of personality in obsessions—is the culmination of this ambivalence of feelings and impulses.

The doubling of personality demands the preservation of one part of consciousness, the part which can be aware of the demoniated possession. We shall find it again in the delusions of the possessed who suffer from persecution-mania, with their very specific hallucinations. When, on the other hand, consciousness is completely abolished and imagination triumphs, we get the dream-delusion of the confusional state, from which it is only possible to draw the subject, for a moment, in the very first hours, and in convalescence. The possessed suffering from persecution-mania, and those suffering from confusional states, represent the two extreme poles of mental alienation in its demonopathic form. Between these poles the other mental disturbances constitute intermediate types.

Two of our patients were attacked by this second variety of demonopathy. One of them, Sylvia,[1] was forty-six years old at the time of her arrest, on 7th August, 1919. She had been found by the police at the door of a church, completely naked, her rosary in her hand. She talked excitedly, transmitting the thoughts of a dead friend which imposed themselves on her. She had set out to convert M. Clemenceau. She was naked because a pure soul is always intact. The approach of the turn of life had brought on this crisis.

Sylvia had always been highly imaginative, living an intense inner life, given up to art and to love. At first she worked in the studio of her father, a talented artist, later on with her lover, who was, like herself, a sculptor. He died at the end of 1918; her grief was intense and she attempted to poison herself with gas. Friends saved her, and she began afterwards to turn to religion as the sole means of finding her lover again. Immediately she became a mystic. A priest advised her to be active, so she divided her time between religious practices and the duties of a nurse in an institution in the liberated territories, but she grieved to find that occupation brought no appeasement of her sorrow.

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[1] Laignel-Lavastine et Vinchon, *Bulletin de l'Académie de Médecine*, March 1920.

In these circumstances she made the acquaintance of another nurse, an old woman addicted to spiritualism, in which she saw a proof of the Catholic faith, permitted by God to this end. Before this, Sylvia had only glanced through one book on occultism. She learned from her friend that communication with " the other side " is announced by a swelling of the arm, and that mediums are subject to disturbing premonitions. The soil was ready. One evening, before going to sleep, Sylvia automatically traced unintelligible characters. Next day she felt a cramp in her arm and wrote, under the impulse of a force which seemed to her outside herself, but without losing consciousness, replies to her anxious questions on the fate of her lover after his death. In the same way she learnt the death of her brother-in-law which, it appears, was a fact.

But religious scruples prevented her from going on. She practised her religion with devotion, and, after a sermon on the " Virgin of the Redemption," made a vow to carve a figure of her. This thought entirely filled her mind. She carved as she had written, driven, she believes, by an entity from " the other side," but without losing consciousness. A few days later she modelled the head of an Infant Jesus in the same way. During this period the patient fell fairly frequently into ecstasies. One of these ecstasies " seized " her when in the middle of the street, and she came to herself in hospital. She was now calm and no longer anxious about the fate of her lover, but this apparent equilibrium was not to last.

A few days after modelling the Infant Jesus a tremendous disturbance invaded her. Electric waves were projected upon her. She soon began to live in an unreal world, in the midst of interminable dialogues, divine or diabolic. Her studio appeared inhabited by good and evil spirits. She did not see them, but sensed their presence. Menaces and commands overwhelmed her. " Spasms " all down the vertebral column warned her of the pains that were to come upon her.

It was the Devil who forced her to go to church, first in her chemise, then naked, in the early hours of the morning, for the phenomena are far more intense during the night. He also caused her to see indecent things, mentally, during her prayers. He obliged her to limp if she met a cripple, to grope her way, if a blind man. His influence was now stronger than all else and she believed herself veritably possessed.

At the outset of treatment at the Clinic for Mental Disease, Sylvia was treated for boils, and afterwards for acute rheumatoid arthritis. When the rheumatism was cured, " the veil was rent, and in a hiccough she vomited the Demon that was in her." She began once more to judge the exterior world sanely, regained ideas of time and space, temporarily lost, and understood from what she had been suffering : an attack of confusional insanity.

The patient left the clinic in 1920. She was calm and sleeping well, though sad, and finding difficulty in beginning work again. The past worried her, and she was afraid that she had committed sacrilege. The external voices became silent : the voice of God alone was heard within her during her prayers and communion. Her thoughts then assumed extreme precision : it seemed to her that the inner language was spoken distinctly within her body.

In Sylvia, the succession of phases which paved the way for the confusional attack was classic. Moral and physical depression, an education in automatism under the influence of a suggestion to find a reply to her questionings, an unfruitful attempt to turn towards a useful activity, an invasion of graphic and sculptural automatism, a loss of consciousness of external surroundings, and finally delusional insanity. During this phase there was to be seen clearly the classic dualism which makes of the patient both the battleground and the prize of a struggle between the Devil and God, but at that period the influence of the Devil preponderated. It was quite different after the cure, when Sylvia approached the condition of the non-delusional mystics. One interesting point was noticed : the absence of visions during the delirium, while voices were numerous. Sylvia, in spite of being a sculptor, is essentially auditive in normal life and she has to make a very great effort to construct internal visual images.

The second patient's case is more classical. Her story will establish for the reader the type of the confusional state in its demonic form.

Maria, since her marriage, had lived in a circle of Italian occultists. She was a woman of thirty-five, the mother of two healthy children. Four days after the delivery of the third child she was feverish and had symptoms indicating an infection, which hung about for two months, producing, little by little, general lassitude and insomnia She suffered from tightness in the throat, from constriction of the temples, from violent itching, especially on the legs, with sensations of heat ; the region of the heart was painful. She was alternately pale and flushed.

One night her husband was awakened by a rattle in her throat. The sick woman, in the paroxysm of her anguish, groaned and twisted about, her mouth twitching. Two days later, fresh rattles and a recurrence of the anguish. She suffered from burnings and bitings. Her skin burnt, but there was no temperature. The patient thought she was about to die, and demanded a priest. A sedative injection calmed her.

The general condition grew worse. The spasms of pain followed one another night and day. The delusional state began four months from the beginning of the disturbances, about nine o'clock at night. She was flushed, with a very hot skin, but still without fever. She put a shawl of white wool around her head, cried, and tossed on the bed, ceaselessly asking for a drink, suffering a great deal. The room appeared to her full of Demons who rushed upon her, with whom she must struggle. She was afraid of everything black, and begged her husband to put on a white suit. She forced him to recite litanies. From this day on she began to have the illusion that mysterious entities were inhabiting her body ; alike in her husband's face and in the portraits in the room she discovered the features of diverse people. The people who surrounded her appeared to her possessed like herself. She stripped herself, lay down on a sheet on the floor and alternated attitudes and gestures which recalled both the various parts of the Mass and the phases of carnal love. She reproduced before her husband a sort of black Mass, after which she became calm again and proclaimed herself *Eve resuscitated*, who had conquered pride and the Demons and was now to know eternal happiness.

The following day the delusion was renewed, after a short sleep. *Eve resuscitated* still saw around her the different personalities that made up the individuals present. She preached the Gospel, reconciliation with Germany, the love of spirits and of hearts. Then she entered upon the domain of the sciences, which she explored by intuition, like the occultists of the sixteenth century. The result of these intuitions culminated in a disconcerted synthesis wherein mingled, with apparent logic, mechanics, mathematics, astronomy, theology, sacred and profane history. The cerebral excitement was at its height, and persisted during the following days, replacing the painful spasms, which were now much rarer. She was now able to leave for the country.

Then intellectual exaltation alternated with periods of torpor ; yet when the patient was interrogated she appeared quite lucid and her replies gave evidence of adequate orientation in time and space.

In the country, Maria responded to the tranquillising influence of nature and wished to devote herself to farm-work. But at the end of a week she became nervous again, mistrustful towards her father, neglectful of her child. Soon afterwards light caused her pain. She could not make any effort of any kind, constantly required to sleep. Eroticism reappeared from time to time. Sadness was frequent. Her remarks were disconnected and infantile. Two months after, a fresh crisis occurred without any known reason. One day she went out about four o'clock in the morning, to go to Mass and have her little girl baptised. She roused the priest. When he refused, she returned to the house, perturbed, and had a sort of syncope. In the evening of that day, while looking fixedly at the sun, she saw there beings who spoke to her, and commanded her to flee. She set out, leapt streams, floundered in bogs where she lost her shoes, leapt fences. Finally, she fell on the road, like an exhausted animal. She was brought back in a motor-car, delirious and in a burning fever.

In the night she burnt papers, books, banknotes, money being the work of the Devil. She attempted to drown her child. The room was once more full of Demons whom she addressed and cursed. The patient flung herself on her father, bit him, tried to fell him with a stool. She wept, laughed, sang, cried, chewed up flowers like an animal. Her strength was increased tenfold. She escaped from two men who were holding her, and again ran naked into the garden. She had to be shut up.

In the asylum, automatic writing and actions were continuous and always inspired by the Demon. She returned to the interpretation of the sciences. When much excited she gave herself up to obscene gestures, accompanied by erotic speech. Abruptly one day she became calm and lucid again, so that the doctor allowed her comparative liberty in the institution, which she left after a stay of two and a half months.

Her husband just then noticed that she had become positively obese. She was very tired, but remembered the voices, the entities, that haunted her, with details of even the most violent scenes. Her nights were still disturbed by nightmares. She was more and more distrustful and impulsive, then fell into a lassitude that sometimes became actual stupor. She spent long hours in bed. At other times her activity became feverish again. Disturbances of the circulation, with feelings of heat, and digestive troubles, were unceasing. The pain in the nape of the neck was often severe, the region of the heart remained sensitive. She separated herself, little by little, from her children. Violent sexual desires tormented her.

Maria, the daughter of a nervous father, had always been sad and self-contained, like the melancholics of the ancients. She was, moreover, choleric and susceptible. But intelligence and taste were not lacking in her as soon as one approached her favourite subjects, music and literature. On the other hand, her daily life seemed to her without savour. During the three years we have been following her case we have observed a progressive amelioration. In spite of our advice, she remains hostile to her husband, whom she accuses of being cold and distant, while she is extremely sentimental. But her distrust of us has gone. She is able to work a little, giving singing-lessons. And she has returned to the regular practice of the Catholic religion, under the authority of a well-instructed priest. Doubtless the cure is not complete, but social life has become possible again.

The influence of her surroundings was paramount in the case of Maria. These surroundings gave so special a form to her delusions, recalling the classic cases of possession. In spite of her errors concerning the external world, which had turned into the scenery of hell, Maria remembered everything. She was evidently guided, in the evocation of her remembrances of her illness, by a knowledge of her feelings and by her notions of occultism. The infection she suffered from served as the determining cause. The rational therapy was to attempt to guide this ardent soul towards some activity in harmony with her tastes: music and religious discipline, the Catholicism of her childhood. The result of this treatment may be considered favourable.

Beside the demonopathies, which are connected with the dream-delusions of confusional states, we must say a word about the demoniacal form of maniacal states. Demoniacal manias arise from the same predisposing causes, but the excitement of the mind and their greater activity give them a peculiar colouring. The maniac appears gay, teasing, unbalanced intellectually, and disordered in his gestures as in his thoughts. Entrenched in his bed, he showers upon his visitors the arrows of his criticism, lets nothing pass, and bursts into strident laughter on the least occasion. It is the very laugh of Satan, as one hears it at the theatre. It is not unusual for the maniac to believe that he has become the Devil; this gives him the opportunity to mock and blaspheme as he pleases. But the illusion of the presence of a Demon in his body and in his mind is always missing. He cannot fix his attention sufficiently to become conscious of a disturbance of his personality. The maniacally hyperexcited are but more or less successful caricatures of the possessed of the ancients, while hysterics are very close portraits.

In Maria and in Sylvia, after the delusions of the acute period, the mind tends to linger in the soothing, peaceful formula which has brought it calm. It manages to complete its cure in it. In the case of Abbé G—— and Angèle, instead of a return to freedom of thought and peace of heart, the disquietude persists and expresses itself in the impoverished form of delusion. One day resembles another ; visions, voices, and phrases repeat themselves, around an identical theme. The picture is that of Séglas' cases of the possessed with persecution-mania.

Simone de F—— was at this point in the evolution of a spiritualistic and demoniacal delusion. For a long time she had had exophthalmic goitre. This affliction, aggravating an already difficult character, had been the cause of her divorce. Unstable and inconstant, she had never made a long stay in a town nor known a long affection. Her adventures had brought her to San Francisco, where she was painting portraits. During the War, she succeeded in returning to France, to the home of one of her cousins, the wife of a rich landowner, who offered her hospitality in her château.

In America, Simone had often frequented the spiritualists ; she had become a medium, but only regarded her powers as a pastime. In France she was overwhelmed by the War, and just at the time the first signs of the change of life appeared. In spite of her peaceful surroundings, insomnia set in, rapidly followed by anxiety states during the day. She lived in a state of perpetual fear, imagining that suitors whom she had refused in the old days were seeking to revenge themselves. One day she rushed from her room in terror, but was stopped on the main stairway by a voice which threatened her and predicted the most terrible misfortunes. The same voice mocked her and reminded her of her age, which would prevent her from refashioning her life. After that, she was certain of the identity of the speaker : Satan alone could speak thus.

She called for help : the occupants of the house came running, and beheld a dramatic scene. Simone believed herself to be surrounded by Devils, animals, spirits, by a whole fantastic witches' Sabbath lit up with the colours of hell. She was put to bed. The people and things which surrounded her transformed themselves and appeared to be burning in flames. The patient had to be transferred immediately, on account of her excitement, to an asylum, where for three weeks the delirium persisted with extreme violence. It became calmer towards the end of the month, but, as the cost of the treatment had absorbed her meagre resources, her family had to take Madame de F—— away.

The delusions persisted, although less violently : she was torn between good and evil forces ; with the Demons, the spirits of the rejected suitors return. Her throat was constricted ; she suffered torments. She asked the advice of doctors, of a Hindu fakir " who works miracles," but did not manage to inspire her with confidence. Sometimes at night the Devils returned in swarms around her. Knocking was heard continually in the walls of her room. The spirits were within her, but did not manage to take possession of all her will : their power was limited to an action upon the organs, to stopping her heart, to constricting her throat.

In order not to frighten those around her, Simone did not speak of her miseries. She went to the sea, where she continually heard multitudinous voices ; her ears are stopped at times; her sight impaired. She has difficulty in painting the portraits that form her means of livelihood. Only walking in the open air can somewhat calm her distress. Frantic, she seeks a situation, tries dress-making and housekeeping. But she is still obsessed by threatening voices which pursue her ; she does her work badly and is always got rid of. Her depression is very great. She desires nothing save some corner where she can go to sleep and die in peace.

Our patient is now sought in marriage by an American who has fallen very much in love with her. It seems to her that he is destined to become the rival of the spirits. We see her again when she is on the point of leaving for America ; her mental state is still the same. Three voices make an incessant din in her head and in her body. This is the tax levied by her spiritualistic experiences of former days.

A year later, Simone writes from America. She is married to this American, a descendant of French emigrants to California, who does not know his mother tongue. She herself does not know English. Thanks to this queer situation, she is able to save her face. She is even a little the protectress of this new husband, whom she looks upon as a big boy. Calm returns in this setting of happy family life, allowing her to begin work again, but the three voices still pursue her.

Eight months after this struggle, Simone is almost happy : new spirit forces surround her. She no longer paints, but occupies herself a little in visiting the sick in the hospitals, and among these chooses, for preference, the neurasthenics. The hallucinations diminish. The delusions have not disappeared ; they have only developed into something less painful.

Simone is the modern "possessed," who believes herself the victim at times of Demons and at times of spirits. She scarcely identifies these importunate guests. The possession remains verbal and only reacts upon her general activity by stopping it. During the whole period following the incident at her friend's house she was very weak and suffered a great deal as soon as the excitement diminished. After her very short stay at the asylum, her condition showed signs of being chronic. The persecutors, spirits or Demons, triumphed until, owing to better conditions of life, her suffering was appeased.

Our two last patients are two sisters, Alice and Jeanne. Alice has induced in Jeanne her own delusion. Alice, aged forty-four, is a dressmaker. She sleeps badly, and has suffered a great deal since the month of January 1925. She lived in the country during her youth, with simple peasants who never left their village in Lorraine, where sorcerers are apparently unknown. Alice got to know of spiritualism in Paris, by reading several pamphlets about it. She looked thin and tired at the first consultation. She complained of hearing voices speaking night and day in her body. Her stomach opens, " and a deep voice is heard." A smaller voice with nasal accent, like that of Punch, replies to it; a third voice is less shrill ; the fourth, a musical voice, sings in her ear.

These voices are those of " demoniacal spirits " who have taken up their residence in her since the spell cast on her by a neighbour. The spell was preceded by nightmares and insomnia, which have never ceased for four years, since the death of her mother.

A painful sensation warned Alice that she was the victim of this spell : " her heart was, as it were, turned over in her chest." This sensation obliged her to think of her mother.

The voices name themselves : the deep voice is Satan, threatening, and repeating her secret thoughts. " She has no longer a breath of her own." She feels painful contacts during her prayers, a grip of iron squeezes the nape of her neck, another her loins. A heavy weight burdens her back. Another time, during sleep, the " body of a man " lies down beside her. At yet other times, Satanic forces turn her this way and that and throw her almost out of the bed, while the deep voice cries : " Vile creature, behold yourself and your vices."

They force her to recognise photographs which *they* show her. Skeletons and coffins dance in the embrasure of the window. *They* throw magnesium at her. *They* shake her by electrical discharges accompanied by lightning-flashes above her head. *They* electrify her genital organs. She smells bad smells, smells of a man, in her room. The furniture creaks. Her teeth grind together. Objects appear to move about. Visions and voices are the component parts of a picture at once *macabre* and erotic.

Alice is " possessed " in sudden attacks. During one attack in church, she breaks her rosary. The demoniacal spirit makes her write during other crises, then forces her to tear up her paper, or again he tears a piece of work from her hands, if she wishes to work. He weighs down her limbs if she wants to walk. She has become an automaton in his hands.

At the outset the voices were divided into two camps. The one sang canticles, the others blasphemed. Now the Demons are the conquerors. To protect herself against them, she arranges a little altar in her room. She always has holy water, which she sprinkles in profusion, and she wears medallions. The Demons persecute her by torments and practical jokes, hiding her medallions, making her prick her fingers when she is sewing. She has tried to flee, but the voices find her again three hundred kilometres from Paris.

The physical examination reveals that Alice suffers from tabes, an affection of syphilitic origin, in which psychic troubles are not exceptional.

Treatment improves the patient's condition a little, but does not cause the delusions to disappear. " There is still the same struggle, but, since *He* no longer overturns my heart, I shall escape." She trembles less at the approach of the Demons. At church it is now possible for her to listen to a sermon, on condition that she can sit just under the preachers' pulpit, so that the Devil may be less strong. The dissociation of personality is less noticeable. Alice can regain the control of actions which were impossible to her a few weeks ago, she works with less effort. The voices are less aggressive, less coarse, less erotic ; but let us not deceive ourselves ; all we can hope for is a return to tranquillity and a peaceful evolution of the delusion.

Jeanne, Alice's elder sister, who is fifty-two years old, was called to her sister when she was ill in January, to take care of her. She at once perceived the nature of Alice's illness. She attributed it to weakness and to privation. Her first decision was sensible : she called in a doctor, who recommended one treatment only, hypnotism, and advised the patient not to go to hospital. He began, indeed, to make passes, describing the form of the patient in the air. Alice, during these manœuvres, complained of feeling a burning fire in her back : when the doctor said to her, " Let yourself fall," Jeanne, much affected by these manœuvres, felt that all was not straightforward and interrupted the treatment of her sister.

The same evening she began to share the latter's delusions ; she had at first the illusion that someone was weeping inside her, but that was the only manifestation of this kind. Jeanne never experienced what she calls " internal phenomena." She slept with her sister ; next day the side touching Alice was as though paralysed. Electric shocks overturned her heart also. She then realised that a fresh spell had been added to the first, and she accused the doctor. With great difficulty she was prevented from making a scandal and threatening him in his consulting-room.

From time to time a deep voice speaks to her. It is the voice of a man who cries, " I am strong and intact," in a threatening tone, and freezes her with terror. At night her nightmares are terrible and wake her up suddenly. She cries, " Michael Angelo," and shakes Alice, who, in her turn, reassures her by saying, " He is an artist." The voice insults her less violently than her sister. Peculiar smells often disquiet her : Alice's body gives out sulphurous vapours. Both are profoundly excited at the time of their first visit. They become calm together, although Alice alone is treated. But both retain complete conviction as to the reality of the Demon-voices.

In Alice, weakened by misery of all kinds, the classic delusions of " possessed " persecution-mania appeared after a long preparation, lasting for four years, of insomnia and anxiety states. The memory of her mother and sexual memories recurred in the delusions, which were systematically organised, with hallucinations and means of defence. The number of voices indicated the plurality of obscure forces which tormented her. The behaviour of the medical hypnotist did not serve to modify the delusions of the first patient : it was even more disastrous in her sister's case, since it caused her to catch the contagion. Jeanne, weak-minded and very susceptible, reflected as in a mirror all the details of Alice's illness. She shared her convictions, even so far as to become a danger to the doctor.

Suggestion, in these cases, is a two-edged weapon. Jean Wier had already noted that the sorcerers aggravated the spells they pretended to remove. Suggestion aggravates the disease or it cures it.

Alice and Jeanne continue to suffer from parallel delusions since they cannot be separated.

A complete monograph on demoniacal delusional insanity would include, besides the dream-delusions of confusional states, hysteria, demoniacal mania, the systematised delusions of the "possessed" persecution-maniac, the delusions of damnation, and of anxiety-melancholia. These last are the more frequent ; they are also the more banal. The extreme forms of anxiety drive the subject to despair : all is lost, there is no possible hope left, he is damned. He repeats this eternally, his conduct according ill with the idea, playing very incompletely the rôle of the damned. This patient only interests us because his psychology is the inverse of that of the hysteric ; in the latter, imagination plays the almost exclusive rôle ; in the anxiety-melancholic, anxiety annihilates in its own favour the other psychic functions.

The demoniacal content of all these delusions results from earlier mental proclivities, chief among which is the marked exaltation of the imagination under the goad of the instincts. Why are these patients demoniacs rather than mystics ? The yearnings of the former do not go beyond physical love : women, and it is they who are the most liable to this form of disease, wear themselves out with sorrow for a husband or a lover. This sorrow, more physical than mental, attempts to appease itself by the vain illusions of erotic hallucinations, of delusions, of obsessions usually sexual, whereas in the mystics the appeal of the flesh is less strong, feeling soars above instinct, calm succeeds regret ; love takes as model Saint Theresa and her spiritual ecstasies.

Here the will is less in abeyance ; it follows and directs the transports, instead of effacing itself before the senses. Possibly, moreover, certain parts of the nervous system may be less sensitive, the reflexes being in subjection to the predominating influence of the brain.

The brain keeps, within its convolutions, the treasure of belief, which outlives the delusion, just as it was antecedent to it. Thus it evades the physician, and remains in the domain of the psychologist.

When each man limits himself to his own sphere we get nearest to the truth. The doctor who does not permit himself to overstep the limits of his art avoids loss of his authority and assurance. He does not apply the methods which he uses to examine disease to states which are no longer disease.

Cardan, who had sounded all the mystery of demoniac states, has well summarised them in a formula which epitomises our thought : " These things are of three kinds, some are of dreams, some of ecstasy and wonderment, some of pure wakefulness."[1]

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[1] Jérome Cardan, *De la subtilité*, traduction par Richard Leblanc (Paris, Jullian, 1578), p. 453.

CHAPTER VI

RELIGIOUS AND LAY THERAPY: EXORCISM

Until the seventeenth century the Church reserved the treatment of demoniacs to herself. The priests charged with this ministry established the diagnosis and had the remedies prepared. They applied them at the same time as they pronounced prayers designed to drive out the Demon. They sought advice of the doctors only when they so pleased. A curious Italian manual of exorcism, dating from 1697, contains formulæ mingled with conjurations. There arises from it a strange odour of magic, the aromatics and poisonous herbs evoke the Sabbath, while certain classic remedies, such as hellebore, make one think of the apothecary-shops of that day, littered with mortars, alembics, and retorts for the distillation of drugs.

The exorcist, according to the ritual, shall be a pious man, prudent and solid, of ripe age, worthy respect in virtue not only of his function but equally of his grave and serious way of life. He shall understand temperaments, and the action of the feelings upon the soul. Patience and perseverance will uphold him in the struggle against the numberless wiles of the Demon, who will not spare them.

The exorcism shall take place in church or in some other place consecrated to God, after solemn Mass on the great feast days, Easter, Christmas, Ascension, Pentecost. Except in case of absolute necessity, the priest will not exorcise at the patient's house, because of the presence of women, always more prone to fall into the toils of Satan.

We will here mention only the therapeutic rites. They come after the exorcism by salt, water, oil, and bread. They begin with the preparation of an oil compounded for the anointment of the bewitched person.

This oil contains rue, sage, and a variety of fennel, in equal parts, mingled with the ashes of olives and with holy water. The drugs are to boil in the oil, then the mixture is blessed. During the anointing of the possessed person, the priest invokes the aid of God, Creator of the world, against the attacks of the Demon and the phantoms he engenders. He prays the Lord to heal the patient of all languor and weakness, results of the bite of the ancient serpent.

Before the unction the exorcist has informed himself as to which part of the body the spell has afflicted with pain. These parts are usually the belly, the stomach, and the heart. If the pain is situated in the lower parts, the spellbound sufferer shall drink some of this oil every day and shall be exorcised for three or four hours on end. When the pain appears in the stomach and the heart, recourse must be had to the following remedy.

There shall be boiled white hellebore, John's wort, sugar of roses, and male incense or olibanum, in some very good white wine. This mixture shall be blessed. It shall be given to the person to be exorcised at the same time as he is being subjected to the rites, three or four hours a day. If God grant him His grace, he will be cured thus.

Other formulæ contain flowers of broom, white horehound, nettles, and rue. Broom is used to-day as a tonic for the heart, and horehound, since the work of Henri Leclerc, as an antispasmodic. This formula, though empirical, is almost modern and could be administered by contemporary doctors.

After the benediction of the syrups and medicines, the priests shall ask God to make them efficacious in the name of the Three Persons of the Trinity, of the Virgin Mary, and of the hierarchy of the angels. If God grants this efficacy, they will drive out the pestilences which the Devil brings with him, the burning heat and the cold of possession.

The *Flagellum Dæmonum* of Father Jerome

Meng, of the Franciscan Brothers, was approved by his superiors. Beneath the strangeness of its formulæ it hides the ancient knowledge of herbs which came from wizards skilled in their use. This is its chief interest from the medical point of view. The moral treatment, which is to appear in the later rituals, does not exist in this book. Multiple and complicated rites must, on the contrary, have produced an atmosphere favourable to the development of demonopathies.

Many doctors endeavoured to employ the counsels of these rituals in the practice of their art. A contemporary of Schenck, Lucius,[1] tells us about his procedure. He begins by asking the advice of the Church. Then he treats the evil dispositions of the body by his remedies.

The priests have blessed, according to rule, the aliments, the salt, water, and wine of the patient, then the fumigations, pomades, and oils for the unction. The moment has come to call upon the resources of the art. Many doctors employ theriac and alexipharmic in these cases. Lucius thinks that tonics and sedatives would be more useful, provided that the doctors and all present pray, to assist the action of the drugs.

Lucius is called to a poor possessed peasant woman. The Jesuit Fathers had asked his help.

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[1] In the part of the "Receuil d'observations" which dates from 1584, op. cit., edition of 1644, p. 138.

He begins by purging her of melancholic and pituitous humours several times over. In the purgations he mingles zedoary, a variety of Indian ginger, which passes for an antidote and restores the periods of women. Next he bleeds her and prescribes sudorifics. After this medication he decides on a very ancient remedy. The head of the patient is shaved. A live fowl is split in two. This strange plaster is applied to the head of the patient and kept in place with bandages. This treatment effected a cure.

The sudorific remedy most used by Lucius consists of a mixture of pearl barley, betony, and hops. It must first boil for half an hour in ordinary water while the priest blesses it. Then, to this decoction, sarsaparilla and certain barks are added. A fresh brewing in a sealed vessel shall proceed for an hour. The remedy is taken from the fire and is to infuse for twelve hours in a closed jar kept at a high temperature. The liquid is filtered, and other roots are added to it, zedoary and enula, a plant of which Helen was the first to make use against snake-bite. Finally it is boiled to absorption, then it is left to cool. The remedy is ready for use. It is to be taken mixed with wine or other customary drink.

Pearl barley, hops, and sarsaparilla purged the humours. The betony acted as a tonic to the nervous system. Zedoary and enula were antidotes.

The exorcist again blessed the prepared medicament. This treatment was, it would appear, frequently successful.

With Jean Wier things proceed more simply and logically. In direct contrast to Lucius, he demands that the doctor shall be called in first.[1] For, in truth, epilepsy, hysteria, stoppage of the womb, melancholia, may be complicated by accidents so strange that ignorant people attribute them straightway to witchcraft. These occurrences, miraculous in appearance, are, nevertheless, due to natural causes.

When the doctor perceives that the disease is beyond the resources of his art, he will hand over the care of it to the spiritual doctor, " to wit, to the minister of the Church, who shall be a good man, of sound doctrine, holding the mystery of the faith in conscience : who shall be known to be of innocent life, not given to wine nor dishonest gain, and of whom all worthy men give good account."

When the malady is double, at once demoniac and natural, doctor and priest should treat the patient along parallel lines. After purgation and the customary remedies, the rites of exorcism become more efficacious. The first means alone may even produce a sudden cure. Galgaraud, a doctor of Mantua, cured by their means the wife of a costumier, possessed of the Devil and speaking with tongues.

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[1] Jean Wier, op. cit., Livre V., chap. xxviii.

The most original thing in Jean Wier is the importance he gives to the moral treatment. The life and behaviour of the possessed person should be completely known to the doctor ; he must know whether the patient is religious, whether his faith is intact, whether he has been tormented by his senses and passions. Without this knowledge, it is impossible for him to perform any useful work. In possession, the torment of the passions and disturbances of religious feeling recur with added force.

There must also be a correspondence in the affections, in order that it may fall out as is said in the proverb : " Like begets like."

The priest shall, for his part, take an active part in the moral treatment. He disposes of the immense resources of the Faith. He will use examples from Scripture in order to make it revive in the patient, and he shall exhort him to mend his ways after he has been cured. He will fight with all his strength against the stubbornness in evil of certain patients. He will reassure the timorous and the mistrustful by picturing the mercy of God. Priests and doctors must first reach the heart. If the heart is not moved, the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed remain vain formulæ. The spirit of charity inspired the physician to the Duke of Clèves to eloquent pages, he served it with his sound dialectic, never forgetting pity for the tragedies of men.

A comparison of the practices of the two contemporary doctors shows that evolution was beginning to take place. It shows also that this evolution encountered difficulties, of which the chief was a misunderstood tradition. The demonologists had lost memory of the time when the Church classed belief in wizardry among the superstitions. They had so often repeated their assertions that they had become an article of faith, on the same level as the accounts of possession in the Gospels. Thence had proceeded the formulæ of the spellbooks, the queer mixtures of the sorcerers' herbs, and the prayers of exorcism. A Lucius had not known how to free himself from this disconcerting therapy. Jean Wier dared to. A century later the new rituals are impregnated with his spirit, and that of Father Spee, though they still mention magic and magic influences.

While the doctor strove to free himself from empiricism, abandoning the formulæ and preparations of which we have given some idea, giving up the application to the heads of the " possessed " of fowls split in two or rams' heads, the exorcist was ceasing to be the begging friar, exhibitor of relics and seller of blessed objects, himself as picturesque and careless-clad as a

Callot character. The masses had, besides, rather lost their confidence in him. Good wives, avid of his naive and marvellous tales, remained his best customers. The chief reason for his rejection, and its justification, was his dubious way of life. One of them, says Jean Wier, takes about with him a girl whom he has made his mistress. Another introduced himself into the home of a woman alleged to be possessed, and lived with her, while he kept the husband at a distance, sending him to say prayers in the churches of the canton.

The good exorcist, as the French ritual of the early eighteenth century requires him, unites all the qualities that Jean Wier demanded. He must limit his action to his office. He will neither give nor advise any remedy for the patient, but will leave this to the doctor, of whom, for example, he will ask an emetic, which will make the patient throw up the charm he has swallowed with his food.

First and foremost, the exorcist will guard against mistaking for possessed a patient tormented by bilious melancholy or some other affection. The difficulties are many in making this distinction. The malice of the Demon makes him conceal himself under the mask of illness, and encourage a belief that he has left the body of a patient, when really he still possesses it.

It would be absurd to have the intervention of magicians and sorcerers in the healing of the possessed : such intervention is forbidden by the Church, as is the use of any illicit or superstitious means.

The signs which enable possession to be recognised are, above all, the extrinsic characteristics. When these are certain, the exorcist will proceed to the rites and conjurations.

But there exist Demons which can only be driven out by prayer and fasting, as the Gospels tell. With these, much patience, much care, must be exercised. The exorcist must live a holy life, and impose a similar life on the patient, if it is possible.

The exorcism shall take place in private, in church, or in some holy place, but away from any crowd. If the possessed person is ill, or of high rank,[1] or if there is any other reasonable motive, he shall be exorcised at home.

The exorcist must not discourse at length. He must ask only the questions necessary to his office, inquiring as to the number and nature of the Demons. During his inquiry he will avoid the satisfaction of mere curiosity. Thus he will not attempt to find out the future through the replies of the Demon.

The exorcism shall be read with force and authority, with great faith, with humility and fervour. Prayers must be redoubled if the signs reveal the reaction of the Demon. When he begins to manifest himself in any part of the body, the exorcist will immediately make the sign of the cross over that part and will sprinkle it with holy water.

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[1] This exception no longer appears in the modern ritual.

Any trace of evil spells, of charms, of bewitchment, shall be diligently sought out. If any are found outside the body of the patient, they shall be burnt ; it is important to secure the obliteration of every trace of magical operations.

With some years interval between them, the Venetian ritual differs from the French in many points. But a certain number of advances have been made : the intervention of the doctor in dubious cases, the limitation of the ceremonies, and their celebration before a very reduced audience, are among the most important. But the belief in magic was preserved, and the interrogatory as to the number and nature of the Devils still exposed the possessed to a possible aggravation of his malady by suggestion. These criticisms apply to the modern ritual, which differs little from the eighteenth-century version.

In the eighteenth century, medical therapy found new life, by restoring physical agents to a place of honour. Philip Hecquet, who proposed the use of cold baths to cure those subject to hysterical convulsions, had practised this therapy, and seen it applied by doctors, for the "vapours." In the last years of the century, electricity was making its appearance in the therapeutic arsenal. Its promoters dealt a shrewd blow at the belief in demonopathies. They give the following explanations of these diseases, and others of like nature :

> " Demonopathy does not exist," writes Abbé Bertholon. " It is a remarkable fraud or else must be classed with the other illnesses which are analogous to it (acute or chronic delusional states)."[1]

These delusions are the result of too great a quantity of electric fluid in the brain. The electric shock, with the application of the negative pole to the head of the patient, " by dissipating the excess of this fluid, will disperse the cause of the disease."

Abbé Bertholon, enthusiastic over the new science, flung himself into hazardous and far from proven hypotheses. He could not foresee that one day the electric apparatus would be employed to fight suggestion in demoniacs suspected of hysteria.

Having brought the religious and medical therapy of demoniacal states down to the present day, we must conclude by indicating the limits of the power of priest and doctor, this power being considered from the medical point of view only.

They are not both endowed with the same prestige in the eyes of the demoniac. That of the priest is incontestably the greater. The demoniac is a religious person, with a sincere faith. His adherence to the supernatural is absolute. It is not, therefore, astonishing that he should turn more readily towards the doctor of souls, as Jean Wier called him.

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[1] Abbé Bertholon, *De l'électricité du corps humain* (Paris, Didot, 1780), p. 326.

But if this prestige is great, it is also dangerous. The unhappy creature who flings himself at the feet of the priest to implore his deliverance is attentive to the smallest word, to the smallest sign that will suspend or prolong his torment. For a long time he has been preparing this visit, writing letters, asking advice. It has become the central interest of his life. He would stop coming to the priest, if the latter spoke to him of illness. The priest consoles him, encourages him, promises to ask God for his recovery in his prayers. But if he is skilled, and if he follows the rule of the Church, he will energetically refuse any useless exorcism, which might strengthen a suggestion still, perhaps, incomplete. At the outset, with some experience, he will easily manage to hold the patient, and to do him some good. But if deliverance does not come, the patient will become impatient, will begin to ask advice again, and will perhaps confide himself to the care of some healer, medium, or sorcerer. These may do great harm in this hour, which is that of the doctor.

Doctor and priest should collaborate closely. Without the priest, the doctor would not receive any visits from demoniacs, save in exceptional circumstances, or else, in lunatic asylums, he would be called in to those cases of systematised delusional mania with which he can do scarcely anything. A whole class of patients, capable of cure or improvement, escapes him.

On the hypothesis of such a collaboration, on the contrary, these patients come to see the doctor without any mental reservation. They have learnt that they will receive from him the strength which they lack to cast out the obsessions, and that they will find sleep and peace once more. They know that, through him, their torments will be appeased and their attacks disappear. Doubtless the doctor will remain powerless to modify the profound aberrations of religious feeling which have prepared these states. But abnormal or deviated forms of belief are not an illness, when they do not lead to action overstepping the limits of reasonable behaviour.

The collaboration of the priest and the doctor in matters of demonopathy was first urged in the sixteenth century ; since, divergencies of doctrine have separated them. It is much to be desired that the hope of Frederick of Spee and Jean Wier will not remain unfulfilled, and that the association of religious and lay treatment may achieve the relief of those who, without it, would continue, in the midst of our modern life, to suffer the torments of the Possessed of the Middle Ages.

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